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THE  
LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB

1801-1814

VOLUME III



LETTERS OF CHAS. LAMB.















THE LETTERS OF  
**CHARLES LAMB**

IN WHICH MANY MUTILATED WORDS  
AND PASSAGES HAVE BEEN RESTORED  
TO THEIR ORIGINAL FORM ; WITH  
LETTERS NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED  
AND FACSIMILES OF ORIGINAL MS  
LETTERS AND POEMS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
**HENRY H. HARPER**

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**MDCCCV**

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## LETTER XCV

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS MANNING

Late February, 1801.

You masters of logic ought to know (logic is nothing more than a knowledge of *words*, as the Greek etymon implies), that all words are no more to be taken in the literal sense at all times than a promise given to a Taylor. When I expresst an apprehension that you were mortally offended, I meant no more than by the application of a certain formula of efficacious sounds, which had *done* in similar cases before, to rouse a sense of decency in you, and a remembrance of what was due to me! You masters of logic should advert to this phenomenon in human speech, before you arraign the usage of us dramatic Geniuses. Imagination is a good blood mare, and goes well; but the misfortune is, she has too many paths before her. 'Tis true I might have imaged to myself, that you had trundled your frail carcase to Norfolk. I might also, and did imagine, that you had *not*, but that you were lazy, or inventing new properties in a triangle, and for that purpose moulding and squeezing Landlord Crisp's three-cornered beaver into phantastic experimental forms; or, that Archimedes was meditating to repulse the French, in case of a Cambridge invasion, by a

geometric hurling of Folios on their red caps; or, peradventure, that you were in extremities, in great wants, and just set out for Trinity Bogs when my letters came. In short, my Genius (which is a short word now-a-days for what-a-great-man-am-I) was absolutely stifled and overlaid with its own riches. Truth is one and poor, like the cruse of Elijah's Widow. Imagination is the bald face that multiplies its oil: and thou, the old cracked salvy pipkin, that could not believe it could be put to such purposes. Dull pipkin, to have Elijah for thy Cook! Imbecile recipient of so fat a miracle! I send you George Dyer's *Poems*, the richest production of the Lyrical muse *this century* can justly boast: for Wordsworth's *L. B.* were published, or at least written, before Xmas.

Please to advert to pages 291 to 296 for the most astonishing account of where Shakspeare's Muse has been all this while. I thought she had been dead, and buried in Stratford Church, with the young man *that kept her company*, —

But it seems, like the Devil,  
Buried in Cole Harbour.  
Some say she 's risen again,  
'Gone prentice to a barber.

N. B. — I don't charge anything for the additional manuscript notes, which are the joint productions of myself and a learned translator of Schiller, John Stoddart, Esq.

N. B. the 2nd. — I should not have blotted



your book, but I had sent my own out to be bound, as I was in duty bound. A liberal criticism upon the several pieces, lyrical, heroical, amatory, and satirical, would be acceptable. So, you don't think there's a Word's—worth of good poetry in the great *L. B.*! I dare n't put the dreaded syllables at their just length, for my arse tickles red from the northern castigation. I send you the three letters, which I beg you to return along with those former letters, which I hope you are not going to print by your detention. But don't be in a hurry to send them. When you come to town will do. Apropos of coming to town, last Sunday was a fortnight, as I was *coming to town* from the Professor's, inspired with new rum, I tumbled down, and broke my nose. I drink nothing stronger than malt liquors.

I am going to change my lodgings, having received a hint that it would be agreeable, at Our Lady's next feast. I have partly fixed upon most delectable rooms, which look out (when you stand a tiptoe) over the Thames and Surrey Hills, at the upper end of King's Bench Walks, in the Temple. There I shall have all the privacy of a house without the encumbrance, and shall be able to lock my friends out as often as I desire to hold free converse with my immortal mind; for my present lodgings resemble a minister's levee, I have so increased my acquaintance (as they call 'em), since I have resided in town. Like the town [country] mouse, that had tasted a little of urban

manners, I long to be nibbling my own cheese by my dear self without mouse-traps and time-traps. By my new plan, I shall be as airy, up four pair of stairs, as in the country; and in a garden, in the midst of enchanting more than Mahometan paradise London, whose dirtiest drab-frequented alley, and her lowest bowing tradesman, I would not exchange for Skiddaw, Helvellyn, James, Walter, and the parson into the bargain. O! her lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print-shops, toy-shops, mercers, hardwaremen, pastry-cooks! St. Paul's Churchyard, the Strand, Exeter Change, Charing Cross, with the man *upon* a black horse! These are thy gods, O London! A'nt you mightily moped in the banks of the Cam? Had you not better come and set up here? You can't think what a difference. All the streets and pavements are pure gold, I warrant you. At least I know an alchemy that turns her mud into that metal, — a mind that loves to be at home in *crowds*.

'T is half-past twelve o'clock, and all sober people ought to be a-bed. Between you and me, the *Lyrical Ballads* are but drowsy performances.

C. LAMB (as you may guess).

#### NOTE

["So, you don't think there's a Word's—worth . . ."] Manning had written, of the second volume of *Lyrical Ballads*: "I think 't is utterly absurd from one end to the other. *You* tell me 't is good poetry — if you mean that there is nothing puerile, nothing bombast or conceited, everything else

that is so often found to disfigure poetry, I agree, but will you read it over and over again? Answer me that, Master Lamb.”]

## XCVI.—TO THOMAS MANNING

April, 1801.

I was not aware that you owed me anything beside that guinea ; but I dare say you are right. I live at No. 16 Mitre-Court Buildings, a pistol-shot off Baron Maseres'. You must introduce me to the baron. I think we should suit one another mainly. He lives on the ground floor for convenience of the gout ; I prefer the attic story for the air ! He keeps three footmen and two maids ; I have neither maid nor laundress, not caring to be troubled with them ! His forte, I understand, is the higher mathematics ; my turn, I confess, is more to poetry and the belles-lettres. The very antithesis of our characters would make up a harmony. You must bring the baron and me together.

N. B. When you come to see me, mount up to the top of the stairs—I hope you are not asthmatical—and come in flannel, for it's pure airy up there. And bring your glass, and I will shew you the Surrey Hills. My bed faces the river, so as by perking up upon my haunches, and supporting my carcase with my elbows, without much wrying my neck, I can see the white sails glide by the bottom of the King's Bench walks

as I lie in my bed. An excellent tiptoe prospect in the best room : casement windows with small panes, to look more like a cottage. Mind, I have got no bed for you, that's flat; sold it to pay expenses of moving. The very bed on which Manning lay, — the friendly, the mathematical Manning! How forcibly does it remind me of the interesting Otway! "The very bed which on thy marriage night gave thee into the arms of Belvidera, by the coarse hands of ruffians —" (upholsterers' men) &c. My tears will not give me leave to go on. But a bed I will get you, Manning, on condition you will be my day-guest.

I have been ill more than month, with a bad cold, which comes upon me (like a murderer's conscience) about midnight, and vexes me for many hours. I have successively been drugged with Spanish licorice, opium, ipecacuanha, paregoric, and tincture of foxglove (*tinctura purpureae digitalis* of the ancients). I am afraid I must leave off drinking.

#### XCVII.—TO ROBERT LLOYD \*

April 16, 1801.

Fletcher's *Purple Island* is a tedious Allegory of the Parts of the Human body. I would not advise you to lay out six *pence* upon it. It is not the work of Fletcher, the Coadjutor of Beau-

\* An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.



mont, but one Phineas a kinsman of his. If by the work of Bishop Taylor, whose Title you have not given correctly, you mean his *Contemplations* on the State of Man in this Life and that which is to come, I dare hope you will join with me in believing it to be spurious. The suspicious circumstance of its being a posthumous work, with the total dissimilarity in style to the genuine works, I think evince that it never was the work of Doctor Jeremy Taylor Late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland and Administrator of the See of Dromore; such are the Titles which his sounding title pages give him, and I love the man, and I love his paraphernalia and I like to name him with all his attributions and additions. If you are yet but lightly acquainted with his real manner, take up and read the whole first chapter of the HOLY DYING; in particular turn to the first paragraph of the second section of that chapter for a simile of a rose, or more truly many similes within simile, for such were the riches of his fancy, that when a beauteous image offered, before he could stay to expand it into all its capacities, throngs of new coming images came up, and justled out the first, or blended in disorder with it, which imitates the order of every rapid mind. But read all the first chapter by my advice; and I know I need not advise you when you have read it, to read the second. Or for another specimen (where so many beauties crowd, the judgment has yet vanity enough to think it can dis-

cern a handsomest, till a second judgment and a third *ad infinitum* start up to disallow their elder brother's pretensions) turn to the Story of the Ephesian Matron in the second section of the fifth Chapter of the same *Holy DYING* (I still refer to the *Dying* part, because it also contains better matter than the *Holy Living*, which deals more in rules than illustrations — I mean in comparison with the other only, else it has more and more beautiful illustrations than any prose book besides) — read it yourself and shew it to Plumstead (with my Love, and bid him write to me) and ask him if *Willy* himself has ever told a story with more circumstances of *fancy* and *humour*. The paragraph begins “But that which is to be faulted,” and the story not long after follows.— Make these references, while P. is with you, that you may stir him up to the Love of Jeremy Taylor, and make a convertite of him. Coleridge was the man who first solemnly exhorted me to “study” the works of Dr. Jeremy Taylor, and I have had reason to bless the hour in which he did it. Read as many of his works as you can get. I will assist you in getting them, when we go a stall hunting together in London, and it's odds if we don't get a good Beaumont and Fletcher cheap.—Bp. Taylor has more, and more beautiful imagery, and (what is more to a Lover of Willy) more knowledge and description of human life and manners, than any prose book in the language:— he has more delicacy and

sweetness, than any mortal, the “gentle” Shakespear hardly excepted, — his similes and allusions are taken, as the bees take honey, from all the youngest, greenest, exquisitest parts of nature: from plants, and flowers, and fruit, young boys and virgins, from little children perpetually, from sucking infants, babies’ smiles, roses, gardens — his imagination was a spacious Garden where no vile insects could crawl in, his apprehension a “Court” where no foul thoughts kept “leets and holydays.”

Snail and worm give no offence,  
Newt nor blind worm be not seen,  
Come not near our fairy queen.

You must read Bishop Taylor with allowances for the subjects on which he wrote, and the age *in* which. You may skip or patiently endure his tedious discourses on rites and ceremonies, Baptism and the Eucharist, the Clerical function, and the antiquity of Episcopacy, a good deal of which are inserted in works not purely controversial — his polemical works you may skip altogether, unless you have a taste for the exertions of vigorous reason and subtle distinguishing on uninteresting topics. Such of his works as you should begin with, to get a taste for him (after which your love will lead you to his Polemical and drier works as Love led Leander “over boots” knee-deep thro’ the Hellespont), but read first the *Holy Living and Dying*, his *Life of Christ*, and *Sermons*, both in folio. And above all try to get

a beautiful little tract on the *Measures and Offices of Friendship*, printed with his *opuscula* duodecimo, and also at the end of his *Polemical Discourses* in folio. Another thing you will observe in Bp. Taylor, without which consideration you will do him injustice. He wrote to different classes of people. His *Holy Living and Dying* and *Life of Christ* were designed, and have been used, as popular books of family Devotion, and have been thumbed by old women, and laid about in the window seats of old houses in great families, like the Bible, and the *Queene-like-Closet or rare booke of Recipes in medicine and cookery, fitted to all capacities*. Accordingly, in these *the fancy* is perpetually applied to ; any slight conceit, allusion, or analogy ; any “ prettiness ; ” a story, true or false, serves for an argument, adapted to women and young persons and “ incompetent judgments.” Whereas the *Liberty of Prophecy* (a book in your father’s bookcase) is a series of severe and masterly reasoning, fitted to great Clerks and learned Fathers, with no more of Fancy than is subordinate and ornamental. Such various powers had the Bishop of Down and Connor, Administrator of the See of Dromore ! My theme and my glory ! — farewell —

C. LAMB



## XCVIII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

April, 1801.

Dear Manning, — I sent to Brown's immediately. Mr. Brown (or Pijou, as he is called by the moderns) denied having received a letter from you. The one for you he remembered receiving, and remitting to Leadenhall Street; whither I immediately posted (it being the middle of dinner), my teeth unpicked. There I learned that if you want a letter set right, you must apply at the first door on the left hand before one o'clock. I returned and picked my teeth. And this morning I made my application in form, and have seen the vagabond letter, which most likely accompanies this. If it does not, I will get Rickman to name it to the Speaker, who will not fail to lay the matter before Parliament the next sessions, when you may be sure to have all the abuses in the Post Department rectified.

N. B. — There seems to be some informality epidemical. You direct your letters to me in Mitre Court: my true address is Mitre Court Buildings. By the pleasantries of Fortune, who likes a joke or a *double entendre* as well as the best of us her children, there happens to be another Mr. Lamb (that there should be two!!) in Mitre Court. His duns and girls frequently stumble up to me, and I am obliged to satisfy both in the best way I am able.

Farewell, and think upon it.

C. L.

# XCIX. — TO ROBERT LLOYD

June 26, 1801.

Cooke in *Richard the Third* is a perfect caricature. He gives you the *monster* Richard, but not the *man* Richard. Shakespear's bloody character impresses you with awe and deep admiration of his witty parts, his consummate hypocrisy, and indefatigable prosecution of purpose. You despise, detest, and loath the cunning, vulgar, low and fierce Richard, which Cooke substitutes in his place. He gives you no other idea, than of a vulgar villain, rejoicing in his being able to over reach, and not possessing that joy in *silent* consciousness, but betraying it like a *poor* villain in sneers and distortions of the face, like a droll at a country fair : not to add that cunning so self-betraying and manner so vulgar could never have deceived the politic Buckingham, nor the soft Lady Anne : *both*, bred in courts, would have turned with disgust from such a fellow. Not but Cooke has *powers* ; but not of discrimination. His manner is strong, coarse and vigorous, and well adapted to some characters. But the lofty imagery and high sentiments and high passions of *Poetry* come black and prose-smoked from his prose lips. — I have not seen him in *Over-Reach*, but from what I remember of the character, I think he could not have chosen one more fit. I thought the play a highly finished one, when I read it sometime back. I *remember* a most noble

image. Sir Giles, drawing his sword in the last scene, says, —

Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,  
And takes away the use on 't.

This is horribly fine, and I am not sure that it did not suggest to me my conclusion of *Pride's Cure*; but my imitation is miserably inferior, —

This arm was busy in the day of Naseby:

'T is paralytic now, and knows no use of weapons.

Pierre and Jaffier are the best things in Otway. Belvidere is a poor creature, and has had more than her due fame. Monimia is a little better, but she *whines*. — I like Calista in the *Fair Penitent* better than either of Otway's women. Lee's *Massacre of Paris* is a noble play, very chastely and finely written. His *Alexander* is full of that madness, "which rightly should possess a poet's brain." *Ædipus* is also a fine play, but less so than these two. It is a joint production of Lee and Dryden. *All for Love* begins with uncommon spirit, but soon flags, and is of no worth upon the whole. The last scene of Young's *Revenge* is sublime: the rest of it not worth *Id*. — I want to have your opinion and Plumstead's on Cooke's *Richard the Third*. I am possessed with an Admiration of the genuine Richard, his genius, and his mounting spirit, which no consideration of his cruelties can depress. Shakespear has not made Richard so black a Monster, as is supposed. Whenever he is monstrous, it was to conform to vulgar opinion. But he is generally a Man. Read

his most exquisite address to the Widowed Queen, to court her daughter for him : the topics of maternal feeling, of a deep knowledge of the heart, are such as no monster could have supplied. Richard must have *felt*, before he could feign so well ; tho' ambition choked the good seed. I think it the most finished piece of Eloquence in the world ; of *persuasive* oratory, far above Demosthenes, Burke, or any man — far exceeding the courtship of Lady Anne. *Her* relenting is barely natural, after all ; the more perhaps S's merit to make *impossible* appear *probable*. But the *Queen's consent* (taking in all the circumstances and topics, *private* and *public* ; with his angelic address, able to draw the host of<sup>1</sup> Lucifer) is *probable* ; and<sup>1</sup> resisted it. This observation applies to many other parts. All the inconsistency is, that Shakespeare's better genius was forced to struggle against the prejudices, which made a monster of Richard. He set out to paint a *monster* ; but his human sympathies produced a *man*.

Are you not tired with this *ingenious* criticism ? I am. *Richard itself* is totally metamorphosed in the wretched *acting play* of that name, which you will see altered by *Cibber*.

God bless you !

[*Signature cut out.*]

[<sup>1</sup> There are three or four words missing here, as they were written on the reverse side from the signature, which has been cut out. — Ed.]



## C.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

June 29, 1801.

Dear Sir, — Doctor Christy's brother and sister are come to town, and have shown me great civilities. I in return wish to requite them, having, *by God's grace*, principles of generosity *implanted* (as the moralists say) in my nature, which have been duly cultivated and watered by good and religious friends, and a pious education. They have picked up in the northern parts of the island an astonishing admiration of the great author of the New Philosophy in England, and I have ventured to promise their taste an evening's gratification by seeing Mr. Godwin *face to face!!!!* Will you do them and me *in* them the pleasure of drinking tea and supping with me at the *old* number 16 on Friday or Saturday next? An early nomination of the day will very much oblige yours sincerely,

CH. LAMB

## CI.—TO WALTER WILSON

August 14, 1801.

Dear Wilson, — I am extremely sorry that any serious difference should subsist between us on account of some foolish behaviour of mine at Richmond; you knew me well enough before, — that a very little liquor will cause a considerable alteration in me.

I beg you to impute my conduct solely to that, and not to any deliberate intention of offending you, from whom I have received so many friendly attentions. I know that you think a very important difference in opinion with respect to some more serious subjects between us makes me a dangerous companion ; but do not rashly infer, from some slight and light expressions which I may have made use of in a moment of levity in your presence, without sufficient regard to your feelings, — do not conclude that I am an inveterate enemy to all religion. I have had a time of seriousness, and I have known the importance and reality of a religious belief. Latterly, I acknowledge, much of my seriousness has gone off, whether from new company or some other new associations ; but I still retain at bottom a conviction of the truth, and a certainty of the usefulness of religion. I will not pretend to more gravity or feeling than I at present possess ; my intention is not to persuade you that any great alteration is probable in me ; sudden converts are superficial and transitory ; I only want you to believe that I have *stamina* of seriousness within me, and that I desire nothing more than a return of that friendly intercourse which used to subsist between us, but which my folly has suspended.

Believe me, very affectionately yours,

C. LAMB

## CII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

August, 1801.

Dear Manning, — I have forborne writing so long (and so have you, for the matter of that), until I am almost ashamed either to write or to forbear any longer. But as your silence may proceed from some worse cause than neglect — from illness, or some mishap which may have befallen you — I begin to be anxious. You may have been burnt out, or you may have married, or you may have broke a limb, or turned Country Parson ; any of these would be excuse sufficient for not coming to my supper. I am not so unforgiving as the nobleman in Saint Mark. For me, nothing new has happened to me, unless that the poor *Albion* died last Saturday of the world's neglect, and with it the fountain of my puns is choked up for ever.

All the Lloyds wonder that you do not write to them. They apply to me for the cause. Relieve me from this weight of ignorance, and enable me to give a truly oracular response.

I have been confined some days with swelled cheek and rheumatism : they divide and govern me with a viceroy-headache in the middle. I can neither write nor read without great pain. It must be something like obstinacy that I choose this time to write to you in after many months' interruption.

I will close my letter of simple inquiry with

an epigram on Mackintosh, the *Vindiciae-Gallicae*-man — who has got a place at last — one of the last I *did* for the *Albion*, —

Thou'lt thou 'rt, like Judas, an apostate black,  
In the resemblance one thing thou dost lack;  
When he had gotten his ill-purchas'd pelf,  
He went away, and wisely hanged himself:  
This thou may do at last, yet much I doubt,  
If thou hast any *bowels* to gush out!

Yours, as ever,

C. LAMB

### CIII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

August 31, 1801.

I *heard* that you were going to China, with a commission from the Wedgewoods to collect hints for their pottery, and to teach the Chinese *perspective*; but I did *not* know that *London* lay in your way to Peking. I am seriously glad of it, for I shall trouble you with a small present for the Emperor of Usbeck Tartary, as you go by his territories: it is a fragment of a Dissertation on the “state of political parties in England at the end of the eighteenth century,” which will no doubt be very interesting to his Imperial Majesty. It was written originally in English for the use of the *two* and *twenty* readers of the *Albion* (this *calculation* includes a printer, four pressmen, and a devil); but becoming of no use, when the *Albion* stopped, I got it translated into Usbeck Tartar by my good friend Tibet Kulm, who is come to London with a *civil* invitation



from the Cham to the English nation to go over to the worship of the Lama.

The *Albion* is dead — dead as nail in door — and my revenues have died with it ; but I am not as a man without hope. I have got a sort of an opening to the *Morning Chronicle*, Mr. Manning, by means of that common Lyar of Benevolence, Mister Dyer. I have not seen Perry the editor yet : but I am preparing a specimen. I shall have a difficult job to manage, for you must know that Mister Perry, in common with the great body of the Whigs, thinks the *Albion* very low. I find I must rise a peg or so, be a little more decent and less abusive ; for, to confess the truth, I had arrived to an abominable pitch ; I spared neither age nor sex when my cue was given me. *N'importe* (as they say in French) any climate will suit me.

So you are about to bring your old face-making face to London. You could not come in a better time for my purposes ; for I have just lost Rickman, a faint idea of whose character I sent you. He is gone to Ireland for a year or two, to make his fortune ; and I have lost by his going, what [it] seems to me I can never recover — *a finished man*. His memory will be to me as the brazen serpent to the Israelites, — I shall look up to it, to keep me upright and honest. But he may yet bring back his honest face to England one day. I wish your affairs with the Emperor of China had not been *so urgent*, that you might have stayed

in Great Britain a year or two longer, to have seen him ; for, judging from *my own* experience, I almost dare pronounce you never saw his equal. I never saw a man that could be at all a second or substitute for him in any sort. [*Line obliterated.*]

Imagine that what is here erased was an apology and explanation, perfectly satisfactory you may be sure for rating this man so highly at the expense of —, and —, and —, and M—, and —, and —, and —. But Mister Burke has explained this phenomenon of our nature very prettily in his letter to a Member of the National Assembly, or else in his Appeal to the old Whigs, I forget which. Do you remember an instance from Homer (who understood these matters tolerably well) of Priam driving away his other sons with expressions of wrath and bitter reproach, when Hector was just dead? not that, &c.

I live where I did, in a *private* manner, because I don't like *state*. Nothing is so disagreeable to me as the clamours and applauses of the mob. For this reason I live in an *obscure* situation in one of the courts of the Temple.

C. L.

#### NOTE

[Manning had taken up Chinese at Cambridge, and in 1800 he had moved to Paris to study the language under Dr. Hagan. He did not, however, go to China until 1806. — E. V. LUCAS.]

#### CIV.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

September 9, 1801.

Dear Sir, — Nothing runs in my head when I think of your story, but that you should make it as like the life of Savage as possible. That is a known and familiar tale, and its effect on the public mind has been very great. Many of the incidents in the true history are readily made dramatical. For instance, Savage used to walk backwards and forwards o' nights to his mother's window, to catch a glimpse of her, as she passed with a candle. With some such situation the play might happily open. I would plunge my hero, exactly like Savage, into difficulties and embarrassments, the consequences of an unsettled mind; out of which he may be extricated by the unknown interference of his mother. He should be attended from the beginning by a friend, who should stand in much the same relation towards him as Horatio to Altamont in the play of the *Fair Penitent*. A character of this sort seems indispensable. This friend might gain interviews with the mother, when the son was refused sight of her. Like Horatio with Calista, he might wring his soul. Like Horatio, he might learn the secret *first*. He might be exactly in the same perplexing situation, when he had learned it, whether to tell it or conceal it from the son (I have still Savage in my head) — might *kill* a man (as he did) in an affray — he should receive a

pardon, as Savage did — and the mother might interfere to have him *banished*. This should provoke the friend to demand an interview with her husband, and disclose the whole secret. The husband, refusing to believe anything to her dishonour, should fight with him. The husband repents before he dies. The mother explains and confesses everything in his presence. The son is admitted to an interview with his now acknowledged mother. Instead of embraces, she resolves to abstract herself from all pleasure, even from his sight, in voluntary penance all her days after. This is crude indeed!! but I am totally unable to suggest a better. I am the worst hand in the world at a plot. But I understand enough of passion to predict that your story, with some of Savage's, which has no repugnance, but a natural alliance with it, cannot fail. The mystery of the suspected relationship — the suspicion, generated from slight and forgotten circumstances, coming at last to act as instinct, and so to be mistaken for instinct — the son's unceasing pursuit and throwing of himself in his mother's way, something like Falkland's eternal persecution of Williams — the high and intricate passion in the mother, the being obliged to shun and keep at a distance the thing nearest to her heart — to be cruel, where her heart yearns to be kind, without a possibility of explanation. You have the power of life and death and the hearts of your auditors in your hands; still Harris will want a skeleton,



and he must have it. I can only put in some sorry hints. The discovery to the son's friend may take place not before the third act — in some such way as this. The mother may cross the street — he may point her out to some gay companion of his as the beauty of Leghorn — the pattern for wives, &c. &c. His companion, who is an Englishman, laughs at his mistake, and knows her to have been the famous Nancy Dawson, or any one else, who captivated the English king. Some such way seems dramatic, and speaks to the eye. The audience will enter into the friend's surprise, and into the perplexity of his situation. These ocular scenes are so many great landmarks, rememberable headlands and light-houses in the voyage. Macbeth's witch has a good advice to a magic [? tragic] writer, what to do with his spectator, —

*Show his eyes, and grieve his heart.*

The most difficult thing seems to be, What to do with the husband? You will not make him jealous of his own son? that is a stale and an unpleasant trick in Douglas, &c. Can't you keep him out of the way till you want him, as the husband of Isabella is conveniently sent off till his cue comes? There will be story enough without him, and he will only puzzle all. Catastrophes are worst of all. Mine is most stupid. I only propose it to fulfil my engagement, not in hopes to convert you.

It is always difficult to get rid of a woman at the end of a tragedy. *Men* may fight and die. A woman must either take poison, *which is a nasty trick*, or go mad, which is not fit to be shown, or retire, which is poor, only retiring is most reputable.

I am sorry I can furnish you no better; but I find it extremely difficult to settle my thoughts upon anything but the scene before me, when I am from home, I am from home so seldom. If any, the least hint crosses me, I will write again, and I very much wish to read your plan, if you could abridge and send it. In this little scrawl you must take the will for the deed, for I most sincerely wish success to your play. — Farewell,  
C. L.

#### CV.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

[September 16, 1801.]

Dear Rickman, — Your letter has found me at Margate, where I am come with Mary to drink sea water and pick up shells. I am glad to hear that your new dignities sit so easy upon you. No doubt you are one of those easy “well dressed” gentlemen, that we may know at first sight to belong to the “Castle,” when we meet them in the Park. Your letter contains a very fair offer about my Play, which I must first dispatch. I seriously feel very much obliged to you *and all that*, but I have a scheme in my head to print it

about Xmas time, when the Town is fuller!! about that time I expect the repayment of a loan, which was bigger than I ought to have trusted, but I hope not bigger than my borrowing friend will then be able to repay. If he should disappoint me, I may throw myself upon you: meantime I am too proud ever to &c. . . . I do not write in *any* paper. George Dyer, that common Lyar of Benevolence, has taken some pains to introduce me to the *Morning Chronicle*, and I did something for them, but I soon found that it was a different thing writing for the Lordly Editor of the great Whig Paper to what it was scribbling for the poor *Albion*. More than three-fourths of what I did was superciliously rejected; whereas in the old *Albion* the seal of my well-known handwriting was enough to drive any nonsense current. I believe I shall give up this way of writing, and turn honest, scramble on as well as I can for a year, and make a Book, for why should every creature make books but I?

G. Burnett had just finished his Essay when I came away. Mushrooms scramble up in a night; but diamonds, you know, lie a long while ripening in the bed. The purport of it is to persuade the world that opinions tending to the subversion of Established Religion and Governments, systems of medicine, &c., should not be rashly vented in every company: a good orthodox doctrine which has been preached up with the "holy text of Pike and Gun" with you in Ireland, and

is pretty familiar in England, but it is novel to George ; at least he never wrote an Essay upon the subject before. Critics should think of this, before they loosely cry out, This is commonplace, what is there new in it? it may be all new to the Author, *be* may never have thought of it before, and it may have cost him as much brain-sweat as a piece of the most inveterate originality. However George is in pretty good keeping, while the merits of his essay lie under consideration. He has got into joint rooms with a young surgeon, whose uncle is an eminent wine merchant, and gives his nephew long tick, so they drink two sorts of wine, and live happy. George was turned out of his White Friars Lodging because he wanted too much attendance. He used to call up the girl, and send her down again, because he had forgot what he wanted ; and then call her again, when his thought came back, to ask what o'clock it was. Fenwick has been urgent with me to write to you about his plan, and I gave him a drunken promise that I would, but you have saved me a disagreeable topic, for I know you have enough to do, and must serve him at your leisure. The Welfare of Ireland, perhaps of the whole world, must not stand still, while the interests of a newspaper are debating ! ! He is very sanguine, and if he tells true, he has had very important encouragement ; but he always said and thought, that the *Albion* had very sufficient patronage. Some people can *see anything*



but their own interest, and they chuse to look at that through glasses. Dr. Christie has transported his solemn physiognomy to Portsmouth in his way to India. He departed without calling upon me, tho' he never could have called upon a more welcome occasion ; consequently he did not get your letter, but I imparted its contents to his brother. I know no more news from here, except that the Professor (Godwin) is COURTING. The Lady is a Widow<sup>1</sup> with green spectacles and one child, and the Professor is grown quite juvenile. He bows when he is spoke to, and smiles without occasion, and wriggles as fantastically as Malvolio, and has more affectation than a canary bird pluming his feathers when he thinks somebody looks at him. He lays down his spectacles, as if in scorn, and takes 'em up again from necessity, and winks that she may n't see he gets sleepy about eleven o'clock. You never saw such a philosophic coxcomb, nor any one play the Romeo so unnaturally. His second play, *My God-Son*, is flatly rejected by Harris, because it is a Persian story about Shaw Abbas and the valiant Sefi his son : but Harris has offered to pay him at all events, if he will take a domestic plain story, not heroic nor foreign ; so, after many indignant declarations that he could not bear such a *creeping way* (his expression) his proud heart has come down to Harris's proposals ; so he is filching a tale out of one of

<sup>1</sup> A very disgusting woman.

Defoe's novels, and has made me write him hints.  
*Floreat Tertia!*

Margate, Wednesday, September 16,  
where I stay a week longer.

And now farewell, Master Secretary! — and if your Diplomatic Majesty has any commissions for tape or bone lace, &c. in London, depend upon a faithful performance of the same. I could find matter for a longer letter, and will another day, if you will find time to read it. Meantime believe me, yours sincerely. Mary sends her kindest remembrances. No hurry for the Pork.

C. LAMB

(*Fragment*)

#### CVI. — TO WILLIAM GODWIN

Margate, September 17, 1801.

I shall be glad to come home and talk these matters over with you. I have read your scheme very attentively. That Arabella has been mistress to King Charles is sufficient to all the purposes of the story. It can only diminish that respect we feel for her to make her turn whore to one of the Lords of his Bedchamber. Her son must not know that she has been a whore: it matters not that she has been whore to a *King*: equally in both cases it is against decorum and against the delicacy of a son's respect that he should be privy to it. No doubt many sons might feel a wayward pleasure

in the honourable guilt of their mothers; but is it a true feeling? Is it the best sort of feeling? Is it a feeling to be exposed on theatres to mothers and daughters?

Your conclusion (or rather Defoe's) comes far short of the tragic ending, which is always expected; and it is not safe to disappoint. A tragic auditory wants *blood*. They care but little about a man and his wife parting. Besides, what will you do with the son, after all his pursuits and adventures? Even quietly leave him to take guinea-and-a-half lodgings with mamma in Leghorn! O impotent and pacific measures! I am certain that you must mix up some strong ingredients of distress to give a savour to your pottage. I still think that you may, and must, graft the story of *Savage* upon Defoe. Your hero must *kill a man* or *do something*. Can't you bring him to the gallows or some great mischief, out of which she *must* have recourse to an explanation with her husband to save him. Think on this. The husband, for instance, has great friends in Court at Leghorn. The son is condemned to death. She cannot tease him for a stranger. She must tell the whole truth. Or she *may* tease him, as for a stranger, till (like Othello in Cassio's case) he begins to suspect her for her importunity. Or, being pardoned, can she not tease her husband to get him banished? Something of this I suggested before. *Both* is best. The murder and the pardon will make business for the fourth act, and the ban-

ishment and explanation (by means of the *Friend* I want you to draw) the fifth. You must not open any of the truth to Dawley by means of a letter. A letter is a feeble messenger on the stage. Somebody, the son or his friend, must, as a *coup de main*, be exasperated, and obliged to tell the husband. Damn the husband and his "gentlemanlike qualities." Keep him out of sight, or he will trouble all. Let him be in England on trade, and come home, as Biron does in *Isabella*, in the fourth act, when he is wanted. I am for introducing situations, sort of counterparts to situations, which have been tried in other plays — *like* but not the *same*. On this principle I recommended a friend like Horatio in the *Fair Penitent*, and on this principle I recommend a situation like Othello, with relation to Desdemona's intercession for Cassio. By-scenes may likewise receive hints. The son may see his mother at a mask or feast, as Romeo, Juliet. The festivity of the company contrasts with the strong perturbations of the individuals. Dawley may be told his wife's past unchastity at a mask by some witch-character — as Macbeth upon the heath, in dark sentences. This may stir his brain, and be forgot, but come in aid of stronger proof hereafter. From this, what you will perhaps call whimsical way of counterparting, this honest stealing, and original mode of plagiarism, much yet, I think, remains to be sucked.

Excuse these abortions. I thought you would



want the draught soon again, and I would not send it empty away.

Yours truly,  
WILLIAM GODWIN!!

Somers Town, 17th September, 1801.

#### NOTE

[The point of signing this letter with Godwin's name and adding his address (Lamb, it will be noticed, was then at Margate) is not clear. In another later letter, where Lamb plays the same trick on Hood, the reason is plain enough.]

### CVII.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

October 9, 1801.

I called lately upon our common friend G. Dyer of Clifford's Inn. I found him inconsolable and very dirty. It seems that Gilbert Wakefield is dead, and George had not got his tribute ready for Mr. Phillips's magazine this month, and Dr. Aikin had sent a little tribute, and Miss Aikin had also sent a *tribute*, and the world would expect a tribute from his pen. At first I imagined that George was touched with some sense of kindred mortality, such as Methusaleh himself must have felt, when he was qualmish; but no, all that disturbed George was that he had not got a *tribute*. *George* the *second*, George Burnett, supt with me last night. He is not got quite well of the metaphyz, but I hope and trust that last night's paroxysm will be the last, and that his disorder has come to its crisis. He maintained that if a high-

wayman, who is going to kill you, *saves* your *life* on your expressly promising to *spare his*, that is, not to prosecute, you are under no obligation to keep your word, because you were in a state of violence, when the promise was made, and the Good of the Whole, which may be partially endangered by suffering that man to live, is to be preferred to any such promise in such circumstances made. If I ever turn freebooter, and light upon George Burnett in my travels, I shall remember what I have to trust to. But saving his metaphyz (which goes off after the first heats of youth like the green sickness) George the second has good parts. He only wants fortune. He as ill becomes adversity as George the first would do prosperity, if any one should leave him a rich legacy. Another of fortune's *bumble servants* is a visitor of mine, who in the language of antiquity would have been nominated Simonds-with-the-slit-lip. I cannot say his linen was of Tarsus, nor quite so robust as Russian, but it certainly craved bleaching, but saving his dirty shirt, and his physiognomy and his 'bacco box, together with a certain kiddy air in his walk, a man would have gone near to have mistaken him for a gentleman. He has a sort of ambition to be so misunderstood. It seems the Treasury does not pay with that weekly promptitude, and accommodating periodicalness, it was wont ; and some constitutions *cannot wait*. He craved the loan of a half guinea ; could I refuse a *gentleman* who seemed in distress ?

He dropt some words, as if he were desirous of trying what effect the Irish air would have upon a *poor* constitution. Could n't you make him a doorkeeper, or a gamekeeper, or find some post for him, not altogether so brilliant as useful? Some situation under the *mintmaster*? — I leave him to your mercy and ability. There is no hurry, for what you have given him will keep him in *work* some time, and for *pay*, why 't is just as his Majesty's ministers shall please. So, Cottle's *Psalms* are come out hot press'd for six shillings. Of course I shall send you a copy. "Poetry is never more delightfully employed than when in the service of its Creator." *Vide* Preface to the Translation (if he had writ one, but he has not).

*Quid maius!* — the Professor is not married, the *Plough* is yet *in posse* — peace is all the cry here — fireworks, lights, &c., abound — White stationed himself at Temple Bar among the boys, and threw squibs; burned one man's cravat. — This is the cream of London intelligence — you shall have the earliest tidings of all new movements.

C. L.

### CVIII. — TO JOHN RICKMAN

Tuesday, November 24, 1801.

Dear Rickman, — I have just put my finishing hand to my play to alter it for publishing. I have made a thorough change in the structure of the latter part, omitting all those scenes which shew'd

John under the first impression of his father's death. I have done this, because I had made him too weak, and to expose himself before his servants, which was an indecorum; and from a theory that poetry has nothing to do to give *pain*; the imbecilities, and deformities, the dotages of human nature, are not fit objects to be shewn. Instead of these rejected scenes I have told his feelings in a *narrative* of the old servant to Margaret, which is a relief to the oppression of John so often *talk-ing* in his own person. I have cut out all the interview of John and Simon, and they do not meet at all, and I have expunged Simon's bloody resolution, which offended you so much from him. I have sent him to *improve himself* by travel, and it is explained that his presence (who is the *good son* in my *parable*) would have been too much of a reproach and a pain to *my prodigal* in the first hour of his grief. The whole ends with Margaret's Consolation, where it *should* end, without any pert incident of surprise and trick to make a catastrophe. Moreover, I have excluded the two tales of the *Witch* and the *Gentleman* who died for love, having since discovered by searching the parish register of St. Mary Ottery, that his disorder was a stranguary, tho' some rhymes upon his gravestone did a little lean to my hypothesis. Moreover, I have gone through and cut out all the Ahs! and Ohs! and sundry weak parts, which I thought so fine three or four years ago. When it comes out you must let me know in what

manner I can transmit you a copy or two. I have been so particular, because you have shewn more liking to my *Margaret* than most people, and my alterations were *in part* the offspring of your suggestions; not wholly, for I have long smelt a jumble. I hope you will find it now nearly all of a piece. I am to christen it *John Woodvil* simply — not *Pride's Cure*. As Dyer says, "I am no enemy to candid and ingenuous criticism, I only deprecate the arrows of calumny:" *vide* most of the prefaces of G. Dyer. Dyer regularly dines with me when he does not go a visiting and brings his shilling. He has pick'd up amazingly. I never saw him happier. He has had his doors listed and his casements puttied, and bought a handsome *screen* of the last century. Only his poems do not get finished. One volume is printing, but the second wants a good deal doing to it. I do not expect that he will make much progress with his *Life and Opinions*, till his detestable *Lyric Poetry* is delivered to subscribers. I shall make him not deliver one volume till both are ready, else he would infallibly have made two troubles and two expenses of it. He talks of marrying, but this *en passant* (as he says) and *entre nous*, for God's sake don't mention it to him, for he has not forgiven me for betraying to you his purpose of writing his own *Life*. He says, that if it once spreads, so many people will expect and wish to have a place in it, that he is sure he shall disoblige all his friends.



G. Burnett shewed me your rousing letter. If I had not known your theory and design, I must have called it a very cruel letter, and sure as I was that your general idea of the treatment which is best for Burnetts and George the Seconds was right, I could not help thinking you had gone too far, even so far that he could not put up with it or you ever after, without doing a moral injury to himself. But you must pursue your own course, which nine times out of ten will be more judicious than mine. The less of interference in these cases, the better. I was principally (if not only) sorry that you assured him of Southey's opinion of the mediocrity of his understanding perfectly agreeing with your own. Southey was the last plank of the scaffold which propt up George in his opinion of himself. But I dare not affirm you did wrong. I am not a teacher in Israel.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

#### CIX.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

November, 1801.

A letter from G. Dyer will probably accompany this. I wish I could convey to you any notion of the whimsical scenes I have been witness to in this fortnight past. 'T was on Tuesday week the poor heathen scrambled up to my door about breakfast time. He came thro' a violent rain with

no neckcloth on, and a *beard* that made him a spectacle to men and angels, and tapped at the door. Mary open'd it, and he stood stark still and held a paper in his hand importing that he had been ill with a fever. He either would n't or could n't speak except by signs. When you went to comfort him he put his hand upon his heart and shook his head and told us his complaint lay where no medicines could reach it. I was dispatch'd for Dr. Dale, Mr. Phillips of St. Paul's Churchyard, and Mr. Frend, who is to be his executor. George solemnly delivered into Mr. Frend's hands and mine an old burnt preface that had been in the fire, with injunctions which we solemnly vow'd to obey that it should be printed after his death with his last corrections, and that some account should be given to the world why he had not fulfill'd his engagement with subscribers. Having done this and borrow'd two guineas of his bookseller (to whom he imparted in confidence that he should leave a great many loose papers behind him which would only want methodizing and arranging to prove very lucrative to any bookseller after his death), he laid himself down on my bed in a mood of complacent resignation. By the aid of meat and drink put into him (for I all along suspected a vacuum) he was enabled to sit up in the evening, but he had not got the better of his intolerable fear of dying ; he expressed such philosophic indifference in his speech and such frightened apprehensions in his

physiognomy that if he had truly been dying, and I had known it, I could not have kept my countenance. In particular, when the doctor came and ordered him to take little white powders (I suppose of chalk or alum, to humour him), he eyed him with a *suspicion* which I could not account for; he has since explain'd that he took it for granted Dr. Dale knew his situation and had ordered him these powders to hasten his departure that he might suffer as little pain as possible. Think what an aspect the heathen put on with these fears upon a dirty face. To recount all his freaks for two or three days while he thought he was going, and how the fit operated, and sometimes the man got uppermost and sometimes the author, and he had this excellent person to serve, and he must correct some proof-sheets for Phillips, and he could not bear to leave his subscribers unsatisfy'd, but he must not think of these things now, he was going to a place where he should satisfy all his debts; and when he got a little better he began to discourse what a happy thing it would be if there was a place where all the good men and women in the world might meet, meaning heav'n, and I really believe for a time he had doubts about his soul, for he was very near, if not quite, light-headed. The fact was he had not had a good meal for some days and his little dirty niece (whom he sent for with a still dirtier nephew, and hugg'd him, and bid them farewell) told us that unless he dines out he subsists on tea and

gruels. And he corroborated this tale by ever and anon complaining of sensations of gnawing which he felt about his *heart*, which he mistook his stomach to be, and sure enough these gnawings were dissipated after a meal or two, and he surely thinks that he has been rescued from the jaws of death by Dr. Dale's white powders. He is got quite well again by nursing, and chirps of odes and lyric poetry the day long; he is to go out of town on Monday, and with him goes the dirty train of his papers and books which follow'd him to our house. I shall not be sorry when he takes his nipt carcase out of my bed, which it has occupied, and vanishes with all his lyric lumber, but I will endeavour to bring him in future into a method of dining at least once a day. I have proposed to him to dine with me (and he has nearly come into it) whenever he does not go out; and pay me. I will take his money beforehand and he shall eat it out. If I don't it will go all over the world. Some worthless relations, of which the dirty little devil that looks after him and a still more dirty nephew are component particles, I have reason to think divide all his gains with some lazy worthless authors that are his constant satellites. The Literary Fund has voted him seasonably £20, and if I can help it he shall spend it on his own carcase. I have assisted him in arranging the remainder of what he calls poems, and he will get rid of 'em I hope in another [*Here three lines are torn away at the foot of the*

*page, wherein Lamb makes the transition from George Dyer to another poor author, George Burnett.]*

I promised Burnett to write when his parcel went. He wants me to certify that he is more awake than you think him. I believe he may be by this time, but he is so full of self-opinion that I fear whether he and Phillips will ever do together. What he is to do for Phillips he whimsically seems to consider more as a favor done *to* P. than a job *from* P. He still persists to call employment *dependence*, and prates about the insolence of booksellers and the tax upon geniuses. Poor devil! he is not launched upon the ocean and is sea-sick with aforethought. I write plainly about him, and he would stare and frown finely if he read this treacherous epistle, but I really am anxious about him, and that [?] it nettles me to see him so proud and so helpless. If he is not serv'd he will never serve himself. I read his long letter to Southey, which I suppose you have seen. He had better have been furnishing copy for Phillips than luxuriating in tracing the causes of his imbecility. I believe he is a little wrong in not ascribing more to the structure of his own mind. He had his yawns from nature, his pride from education.

I hope to see Southey soon, so I need only send my remembrance to him now. Doubtless I need not tell him that Burnett is not to be foster'd in self-opinion. His eyes want opening, to see himself a man of middling stature. I am not oculist



enough to do this. The booksellers may one day remove the film. I am all this time on the most cordial supping terms of amity with G. Burnett and really love him at times : but I must speak freely of people behind their backs and not think it backbiting. It is better than Godwin's way of telling a man he is a fool to his face.

I think if you could do anything for George in the way of an office (God knows whether you can in any haste [? case], but you did talk of it) it is my firm belief that it would be his *only chance* of settlement ; he will never live by his *literary exertions*, as he calls them : he is too proud to go the usual way to work and he has no talents to make that way unnecessary. I know he talks big in his letter to Southey that his mind is undergoing an alteration and that the die is now casting that shall consign him to honor or dishonor, but these expressions are the convulsions of a fever, not the sober workings of health. Translated into plain English, he now and then perceives he must work or starve, and then he thinks he'll work ; but when he goes about it there's a lion in the way. He came dawdling to me for an *Encyclopædia* yesterday. I recommended him to Norris' library, and he said if he could not get it there, Phillips was bound to furnish him with one ; it was Phillips' interest to do so, and all that. This was true with some restrictions ; but as to Phillips' interests to oblige G. B. ! Lord help his simple head ! P. could by a *whistle* call

together a host of such authors as G. B. like Robin Hood's merry men in green. P. has regular regiments in pay. Poor writers are his crab-lice and suck at him for nutriment. His round pudding chops are their *idea* of plenty when *in their idle fancies they aspire to be rich.*

What do you think of a life of G. Dyer? I can scarcely conceive a more amusing novel. He has been connected with all sects in the world, and he will faithfully tell all he knows. Everybody will read it; and if it is not done according to my fancy I promise to put him in a novel when he dies. Nothing shall escape *me*. If you think it feasible, whenever you write you may encourage him. Since he has been so close with me I have perceiv'd the workings of his inordinate vanity, his gigantic attention to particles and to prevent open vowels in his odes, his solicitude that the public may not lose any tittle of his poems by his death, and all the while his utter ignorance that the world don't care a pin about his odes and his criticisms, a fact which everybody knows but himself— he *is a rum genius.*

C. L.

#### CX. — TO JOHN RICKMAN

1801.

*I was the moon-struck man, that was inspired to write on the packet "for John Rickman," and must hasten to clear Burnett of that part of*

his *indictment*. He brought to me his Letter and his Essay, or rather two Essays, and desired me to write myself and put up all together in a parcel. I had no leisure to write then, but I did up his things, and when I had done so the enormous bulk staggered me, and I preferred that obnoxious indorsement to enlarging it with another cover. I was guided by the usages of the India House, where I have often received superscriptions similar, and escaped shot-free. I will never practise upon your pocket in the like manner again, but Burnett stands acquitted.

None but the Bishop could have composed that illustrious specimen of ignorance which you extract, and he alone, in all England, would not understand the absurdity of it, if it were to be pointed out. Still I wish something could be done for him, even if he waited six weeks, *or a day over*, for it. Methinks! (as the Poets say) I see Preferment waiting at the door, *afraid to come in*, till his Worship has finished his *Introduction*, that she may not deprive the world of his matchless labours.

I have nothing to communicate but my thanks. I do assure you that I retain a very lively memory of our old smoking evenings in Southampton Buildings. G. Dyer, our illustrious co-puffer, has emigrated to Enfield, where some rich man, that has got two country houses, allows him the use of a very large one, with a library, where he is getting the final volume of his *Poems* ready,

and then I shall set him about his *Life*: by *use* in a sentence back, I mean dirting and littering.

Southey is not arrived.

Yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

I forgot to notice an anachronism in your first letter, which I am glad to see you correct in a subsequent — you accost me my dear SIR. By what twist of association in your unlucky pericranium have you connected that honor with my cognomen?

Mary thanks you, but she prefers *Rum*.

I have literally *this moment* received your packet for Southey. I mean Burnett's *History of his Own Times* and your letter. For your kind mention of Slit-lips take my warmest thanks. He will have no objection to wait six weeks or *a day over*, tho' it may be damnably more inconvenient for him to *wait*, than for the Bishop. The fact of the "strange flesh" which he is reported to have eaten, astounds me, but I can believe and tremble.

Never mind the ceremony of franking to me. John Company pays.

#### CXI.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

1801.

I sincerely thank you for your repeated offer, but I have just received as much as £50, an old debt which I told you of, and that will a good

deal and more than cover the expenses of printing. I expect to be able to send you some copies in a few weeks. I have not had a proof-sheet yet. I have nothing to claim upon Dyer's account. He paid me from the beginning as near as I can calculate, and I solemnly protest it, to a penny for all the expenses he put me to, and whenever he dines with us he regularly brings his shilling, which is a fair average for what his gluttony devours. To be sure he has occasionally an eleemosynary whiff of tobacco, for which I cannot sconsce the poet. I am afraid he sometimes does not come when he has not got a shilling. I cannot force him, for now his health is come back, he is the most unmanageable of God's creatures. He goes about fetching and carrying for ladies, and always thinking he *must* call upon this lady and t'other gentleman. His first volume is nearly printed, but he is projecting new odes and imper tinences for the second, and I cannot foresee a period. Still he seems by fits bent upon writing his *Life*, and will do it if the prototype is not overtaken with death. I quite give up any hope of reducing him to common sense and human conduct. All that can be done is to bolster up his carcase by a daily habit of dining, until he finishes his mortal pilgrimage. Poor G. Burnett is very ill and reduced. You would deposit your fierce anger if you saw the metaphysician. He has brought his *Introduction* to a finish at last, but he is not in a capacity to go on. Coleridge has re-



commended him to the editor of the *Morning Post*, who has promised to employ him. But a lion is in his foot-path, and he cannot *begin yet*. I suppose he will write to you, and it will be needless to say more of him here. The goul has a gouless and two, if not three young gouls. The goul has not paid me the pittance, for 't was not much, he borrowed of me, but I have reason to believe his circumstances are so squalid that it would be more to expect of him than can be expected from man or goul, to divert his comings-in from the service of genuine hunger and thirst. — Fenwick's *Plough* (how one idea of Poverty introduces another!) is degenerated already from a daily to a weekly paper. I wish it may not vanish into thin air, or come out the same day as Burnett's *Historia Romana* issues from the press. I meantime have made some overtures to the editor of the *Morning Post* thro' Coleridge, who writes for that paper, and hope I am on the point of being engaged. I have seen Southey several times. His wife is considerably improved, and will talk if she is talked to, but she bitterly complains that when literary men get together they never speak to the women. Mrs. Lovel is also in town and Southey's mother, who is *dying*: — “So am not I, said the foolish fat scullion.” Do you remember our unfeeling behaviour at the funeral of that dear young lady, who was withered in her bloom by the untimely stroke of death, and lies in what-d'ye-call-'em churchyard? The tear is falling

while I remember — don't you perceive the Ink is rather *brackish*? as G. Burnett asked in a company at my brother's the other day, whether the 'Thames water at Blackfriars' Bridge was not a little brackish. — The Professor has not yet thrown himself away. I am sorry to find he is about to commit a folly, for I hear that she has no fortune and has one child, and they propose that she shall ease the burden of the family expenses by translating from the French. — Fell, the inevitable shadow of everything which Godwin does, is absolutely writing a play. It is a comedy. It is just finished, and I go this evening in the hope to see it. It will have one trait in it. There can be no mirth in it. An owl making a pun would be no bad emblem of the unnatural attempt. To your inquiry whether Mary swallows certain mixed liquors, she answers that I unfortunately misunderstood that advice, as if it had been address to me, and have almost killed myself by the blunder. But she will profit by the correction. She desires her love and remembrance. White often inquires after you, and as often desires to be mentioned to you, which I as regularly forget. Stoddart is going to begin the study of civil law at the Commons.

Farewell, old comrade and new secretary.

Thine,

C. L.

You must send up your St. Helena letter *im-*

*mediately*, and I will drop it in our box. I can't frank it: John Company never franks *outwards*. A ship, the *Marquis of Ely*, goes at Xmas. The *Armston* goes next Wednesday.

Since I wrote last leaf, I have read Fell's comedy, and am surprised to find it contains, if not sterling wit or character, a liveliness and knowledge of the present popular taste, which has astonish'd me. The serious parts are damn'd flat. But I should not at all wonder, he having a pretty good introduction, even if it should please highly. He has been a minute observer of what *takes* in Reynolds's plays, and has had real actors continually in his view. — Who knows, but owls *do* make puns, when they hoot by moonshine? I shall hear from the *Morning Post* this day, and shall endeavour to get the Theatrical Reports, not *all*, but Kemble's chief characters, and Cooke's, &c.

## CXII.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

1801.

I am not dead nor asleep. But Manning is in town, and Coleridge is in town, and I am making a thorough alteration in the structure of my play for Publication. My brain is overwrought with variety of worldly intercourse. I have neither time nor mind for scribbling. Who shall deliver me from the body of this Death?

Only continue to write and to believe that

when the Hour comes, I shall strike like Jack of the Clock, *id est*, I shall once more become a regular correspondent of Robert and Plumstead. How is the benevolent, loud-talking, Shakspeare-loving Brewer?

To your enquiry respecting a selection from B'p Taylor I answer — it cannot be done: and if it could, it would not *take* with John Bull. It cannot be done, for who can disentangle and unthread the rich texture of Nature and Poetry sewn so thick into a stout coat of theology, without spoiling both *lace* and *coat*? How beggarly and how bald do even Shakespeare's Princely Pieces look, when thus violently divorced from *connection* and *circumstance*! When we meet with "To be or not to be" — or Jacques's moralizings upon the Deer — or Brutus and Cassius' quarrel and reconciliation — in an *Enfield Speaker* or in *Elegant Extracts* — how we stare, and will scarcely acknowledge to ourselves (what we are conscious we feel) that they are flat and have no power. Something exactly like this have I experienced when I have picked out similes and stars from *Holy Dying* and shewn them *per se*, as you 'd shew specimens of minerals or pieces of rock. Compare the grand effect of the Star-paved firmament — and imagine a boy capable of picking out those pretty twinklers one by one and playing at chuck farthing with them. Everything in heaven and earth, in man and in story, in books and in fancy, acts by Confederacy, by

juxtaposition, by circumstance and place. Consider a fine family (if I were not writing to you I might instance your own) of sons and daughters, with a respectable father and a handsome mother at their head, all met in one house, and happy round one table. Earth cannot shew a more lovely and venerable sight, such as the Angels in heaven might lament that in their country there is no marrying or giving in marriage. Take and split this Body into individuals — shew the separate caprices, vagaries, &c., of Charles, Robert or Plumstead — one a quaker, another a churchman. The eldest daughter seeking a husband out of the pale of parental faith — another working perhaps — the father a prudent, circumspective, do-me-good sort of a man *blest* with children whom no ordinary rules can circumscribe — I have not room for all particulars — but just as this happy and venerable body of a family loses by splitting and considering individuals too nicely, so it is when we pick out best bits out of a great writer. 'T is the *sum* total of his mind which affects us.

C. L.

### CXIII.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

January 9, 1802.

Please to send me *one* letter with the *Broad Seal*, for a friend who is curious in impressions.

I am to be sure much gratified with your use



of *Margaret* as a kind of rack to extract confession from women. But don't give me out as your rack-maker, lest the women retort upon me the fate of Perillus, which you may read in your *Ainsworth* under the article Phalaris; or you may find the story more at large by perusing the controversy between Bentley and Boyle. I have delayed to write (I believe I am telling a Lye) until I should get a book ready to send; but I believe this has been all along a pretext recurred to, a kind of after-motive, when the resolution was taken *a priori*, rather than the true cause, which was mixed up of busy days and riotous nights, doing the company's business in a morning, straining for jokes in the afternoon, and retailing them (not being yet published) over punch at night. The lungs of Stentor could not long sustain the life I have led. I get into parties, or treat them with Pope Joan four times in a week. You have dropt in ere now when Norris was courting at such a party, and you know the game. I stick to it like any *papist*. 'T is better than poetry, mechanics, politics, or metaphysics. That's a stop—there's pope—you did not take your ace—what a magic charm in sounds. I begin not to wonder at the bloodshed which dyed Christian Europe concerning Omousia and Omoiousia.—A party of people's *faces* about a fire grinning over cards and forgetting that they have got to go home is the supreme felicity, the *maximum bonum*. White has or is about to write you at my suggestion. We

desire nothing so vigorously as to see Master Secretary in these parts. There are liquors and fumes extant which have power to detain a bachelor from his cold bed till cockcrow.

Fenwick gives routs and balls and suppers — not balls, but splendid entertainments — out of the first fruits of the *Plow* — he had some hundreds of pounds from unthinking nobility. It is no breach of charity to suppose that part is expended — his wife and daughter have got magnificent hats, which Mary waggishly has christen'd Northumberland hats, from his great patron at Charing Cross.

Dyer has at last met with a madman more mad than himself — the Earl of Buchan, brother to the Erskines and eccentric biographer of Fletcher of Saltoun. This old man of near eighty is come to London in his way to France, and George and he go about everywhere. George brought the mad lord up to see me; I wan't at home, but Mary was washing — a pretty pickle to receive an earl in! Lord have mercy upon us! a lord in my garret! My utmost ambition was some time or other to receive a secretary! Well, I am to breakfast with this mad lord on Sunday. I am studying manners. George and my Lord of Buchan went on Thursday last to Richmond in the long coach to pay their devotions to the shrine of Thomson! The coldest day in the year. Enough to cool a Jerusalem-padder. George is as proud as a turkey-cock and can talk of nothing else;

always taking care to hedge in at the end that he don't value lords, and that the earl has nothing of the lord about him. O human nature! human nature! for my part I have told everybody, how I had an earl come to see me. George describes the earl as a very worthy man, who has his hobby-horses; for instance, George says, he will stop you in the street, when you are walking with him, and hold you by the button, and talk so loud, that all the passers-by look at you. So you may guess *why* he cleaves to George the first. If you have read the *Post*, you may have seen a dissertation on Cooke's *Richard III*; which is the best thing I have done. It was in last Monday; stray jokes I will not *mark*, hoping you will always take the good ones to be mine, and the bad ones to be done by John a Nokes, &c.

In haste. Happy new year to Master Secretary.  
C. L.

I had, before your injunction came, given a hint to the Goul, that you were disposed to serve him; this to rear him from the dreary state of despair he was in. But now, *mum*. I wish to God you may do anything: for all the elements have fought against him.

My play will most likely accompany my *next*. Fell's goes on slow and sure, like his own long stories. It is *much, much*, better than I could believe. Some of it is very *good farce*, which is all a modern play need be.

#### CXIV. — TO JOHN RICKMAN

January 14, 1802.

You may suspect as much as you please (suspicion ever haunts the guilty mind) that I did not do that thing about Richard, but I tell you I did, and I also made the Lord Mayor's Bed, which you are welcome to rumple as much as you please. I plead guilty to certain "felicities of phrase" — *noviciate* used as an adjective I myself suspected, but did not know that *novice* was any other than a substantive. But what the devil's all this coil for about delightful artifices and elastic minds? and how should a man at Bantry Bay know anything about good English? the fact is, that it was but an unfinished affair at first, and by the *intelligent artifice* of the editor it was made more chaotic still. As it stands, it is more than half *introduction*: half of which was to be *note*. But it is most probably the last theatrical *morceau* I shall do: for they want 'em done the same night, and I tried it once, and found myself *non compos*. I can't do a thing against time. If I use "do" and "did" to excess, 't is because I know 'em to be good English, that you can't deny. My editor uniformly rejects all that I do considerable in length. I shall only do paragraphs, with now and then a slight poem such as *Dick Strype*, if you read it, which was but a long epigram. So I beg you not to read with much expectation, for my poor paragraphs do only get in when there are none of

anybody's else. Most of them are rejected ; all, almost, that are *personal*, where my forte lies. And I cannot get at once out of the delightful regions of scurrility, the "Delectable Mountains" of *Albion* where whilom I fed my sheep, into the kickshaws of fashionable tittle-tattle, which I *must learn*. I cannot have the conscience to order a paper for Christ Church, on the hypothesis that it is on my account (which is modest), for no paragraphs can be worth eight guineas a year. However, I will try and see if I can get it at an under price as you proposed. — I sent 'em mottoes for Twelfth Day at their own desire — how did they serve me? the first day they put in mottoes by another (most stupid) hand, and the next day mottoes by ditto with some of mine tacked to 'em. They rejected a pretty good one on Dr. Solomon, —

My namesake, sprung from Jewish breeder,  
Knew *from* the hyssop *to* the cedar,  
But I, unlike the Jewish leader,  
Scarce know the hyssop *from* the cedar.

Another of the rejected ones, on Count Rumford, —

I deal in aliments fictitious,  
And teaze the poor with soups nutritious ;  
Of bones and flint I make dilution,  
And belong to the National Institution.

Maybe you did n't see what were *in* of mine.  
The best was, —



## ADDINGTON

I put my nightcap on my head,  
And went as usual to my bed,  
And most surprising to relate !  
I woke a Minister of State !

Another, —

### FRERE AND CANNING

At Eaton School brought up with dull boys,  
We shone like *men* among the *schoolboys* ;  
But since we in the world have been  
We are but *schoolboys* among men.

Your advice about getting a share of the *Post* as  
*fast as I can* ! ! I shall certainly follow. I wish  
I may hold my two-guinea matter.

My scrawl costs you nothing; and me only so  
much ink. Mary's love. We are just setting out  
on a night expedition freezing (the glass at 23 as  
I *bear*, for I don't know a thermometer from a  
barometer) to Pentonville to see Mister Comedy  
Fell and his pretty spouse.

Yours, &c.

C. L.

## CXV.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

January 18, 1802.

George the 2nd has just arrived, has stayed  
over his time !! and written to Lord Stanhope  
without telling his lordship where to find him,  
accordingly must write again.

Dear Rickman, — I have not been able to find

a chapman who will pay half thy father's newspapers. I already read the *Post* upon nearly a similar plan; seven or eight of us subscribe. One keeps it and pays half. But to avert thy wrath and indignation, which I know will burn most furiously if I omit thy commission, I have ordered one at full cost, and there will go the first with the same post which carries this. As Mary seldom sees a paper she will thank your father for the liberty of reading it first, and take care only to send it by the same day's post. She will pay such proportion as a jury before Lord Kenyon shall award.

Dinner is smoking. Yours truly,

C. LAMB

#### CXVI.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

February 1, 1802.

Dear Rickman, — Not having known the sweet girl deceased, your humble servant cannot endite with true passion a suitable epitaph. Here is a kind of substitute for feeling; but your own prose, or nakedly the letter which you sent me, which was in some sort an epitaph and the best one, would do better on her gravestone than the cold lines of a stranger.

A heart which felt unkindness, yet complain'd not;  
A tongue which spake the simple truth, and feign'd not;  
A soul as white as the pure marble skin  
(The beauteous mansion it was lodgèd in)

Which, unrespected, could itself respect :  
On earth was all the portion of a maid,  
Who in this common sanctuary laid  
Sleeps unoffended by the world's neglect.

I have not seen Southey to talk with him about it, but I conclude you addrest a letter to that import to him, as *his* came along with mine. If you stay a little, perhaps he or I may hit upon a better, for I suspect it sadly of commonplace.

I had hoped ere this to send you a book, but the boarders are shockingly dilatory, and seem never to have heard of the fabulous stories of the anxiety of authors and parents.

You will see almost as soon as the receipt of this a first number of a paper in the *Morning Post*, which I have undertaken *solus*, to be called the *Londoner*; I think you will like the first number, as it jumps with your notions about a country life, &c. I have done no more, so I have all the world before me where to chuse. I think you could give me hints. I have seen light papers in the *Agricultural Magazine* which would suit the *Londoner* to a tittle. G. Burnett surprised us with a visit yesterday. His two young lords have run away. George deposes, that he was teaching them their lesson, when he was called down by Lord Stanhope to be introduced to his lordship's mother; when he returned his pupils were flown. They had gone out of window with their best coats and linen. The eldest son of Lord S. served him exactly the same trick, and his lordship sets

it down that these striplings as well as the former (who never came back) were spirited away by the Pitt and Grenville party, to whom he is allied by marriage. He says that Pitt will make them villains. Ministers have already bought off his son and his son-in-law : and he meant to bring up these young ones (the eldest sixteen) to mechanics or manufactures. It is very probable what he says— for the P.'s and G.'s (writing to a Secretary I dare not be more explicit) would go some steps to stop the growth of democratic peers. George declares that he is only sorry on Lord Stanhope's account, who is much agitated, but on his own he don't care at all : nay I have no doubt he is ready to leap at his heart, for Lord S. desires he will stay in his house, and he will try to get him something. So George has got his old desirable prospect of food and clothing with no duty to perform for it. I could fill volumes with a history of his absurdities since the date of my last. Take one or two. *Imprimis*, he overstay'd his three weeks; then he wrote to Lord S. from town to write to him, but forgot to mention his own address; then he was forced to write again to say he forgot, and begg'd his lordship to tell him the exact situation where his lordship's house stood, that he might have no trouble in finding it ! ! ! to write to a peer of the realm to tell the number of his house ! Then he determines to set off for Chevening next morning, and writes that he will come down by the three o'clock stage ; then

he comes to us the night before at eleven and complains bitterly of the difficulty of getting up so early ; then he goes away, and White and I lay wagers that he won't go at all. Next morning, eleven o'clock, enter George the 2nd in a dirty neckcloth; he could not go because he had no linen, and he had not time to go to Southey and borrow it, and inadvertently slips out that to be sure there was a coach went at half past ten. Then my tutor gapes, and stares, and borrows a neckcloth and sets off with all proper humility to my lord's in a post chaise; drives up to the door in style; and there I leave him bowing and gaping to see the fine pictures.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

Mary's grateful thanks for your indulgence, by which she reads my works.

#### CXVII.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

February 4, 1802.

Dear Rickman, — I send you three copies. Keep one yourself, and distribute the others. Perhaps you will send one to her, "whom you in sport do call your Margaret," but this is mere conjecture.

G. Dyer is sitting by me, he begs to be kindly remembered. He has brought news, that a Mr. Wainewright, with a Mr. Frend the pamphleteer,



and Mr. Perry the chronicler, have set up as a committee to procure him an annuity by subscription. Lord Stanhope has sent £50.

Talking of money, you owe me £22, which I paid in advance for your father's papers.

Yours truly,

C. L.

### CXVIII.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

February 14, 1802.

“I take thy groat in earnest of revenge.” One-and-twenty *Margarets* fall to the disposal of your dainty cousin. I sup with him at Southey's on Tuesday, God willing. Your guineas (which, let me tell you, are too much, but you shall have your way) are not absolutely mal-a-pros, for by a cruel reverse of Fortune, that dame who is painted with a wheel to signify to you that she is changes, and rollings, and mutabilities, I am no longer paragraph spinner. The fact is, that Stuart was wonderfully polite and civil at first; I suppose because Coleridge recommended me, from whose assistance in the paper he expected great things, but Coleridge from ill health and unsettlement having hung back, I gradually got out of favor, and Stuart has at last twice told me that I must take more pains about my paragraphs, for he has not been able to draw above one in five from what I have sent him. This in connection with his altered behaviour was hint quite enough for me,

who do not require hints as big as St. Paul's Church to make me understand a coldness, excited my magnanimous spirit to indite a valorous letter of resignation, which I did with some qualms, when I remembered what I gave up: but to tell truth, all the little I have done has been very irksome, and rendered ten times more so from a sense of my employer not being fully satisfied; and that little has subtracted from my pleasure of walking, reading, idling, &c., which are as necessary to me as the "golden vapour" of life itself. My health (silly as it seems to relate) has suffered bitterly. My spirits absolutely require freedom and leisure, and I think I shall never engage to do task work any more, for I am sick. I must cut closer. I am almost ashamed at my capriciousness, as must seem to you, but upon a serious review I do approve of what I've done. I've foolishly involved you (I fear) in an expense of eight guineas a year, which I *think* was on my account; but as it is for *whom* it is, I must not call it foolish. A paper in a country town is a kind of London. But I would gladly purchase your acquiescence by paying half, which I know you won't accept. I have given this up only two days, and I feel myself at elbow room, free and happy. I can scribble now at my heart's leisure, if I have an impulse, and tho' I know I speak as a fool, I am sure I can write better gratis. Say no more about it. I have weighed my loss and my gain, and I write *profit*.

I may yet do the *Londoners* at my leisure.

This letter is short, for I have got a bad headache. Mr. Abbot's elevation, you may be sure, surprised me. I take it for granted you will not be a loser. I am sure I shall be a gainer, if an easterly wind wafts you to England.

Freud was here yesterday. He desires me to set down every day Dyer dines with me, and the committee will pay me, as George is to have no money of his own. George contrives constantly to dine here, when he says he shan't over night, which is very *convenient*, and *vice versa*. It is the damned vanity of being supposed to be always engaged. Now he is got well, he is as freakish as King David at Gath. Nothing can be done with him; save that the committee will preserve him from *felo de se*, that he shan't starve himself.

George the 2nd discharges his important trust, of doing *nothing* for Lord S. with fidelity and diligence. His lordship sends him to town upon any fiddle-faddle errand, and George fancies himself essential to his lordship's comfort. He looks more important than Mr. Dressin, king's messenger.

Mary always desires to be most kindly remembered by you. She bids me *not* tell you that an epigram called *Helen*, in my little book, is of her writing. But it is, every tittle of it. I hope you do not dislike it. We remain yours truly,

C. L., M. L.

## CXIX.—TO THOMAS MANNING

February 15, 1802.

Not a sentence, not a syllable of Trismegistus, shall be lost through my neglect. I am his word-banker, his storekeeper of puns and syllogisms. You cannot conceive (and if Trismegistus cannot, no man can) the strange joy which I felt at the receipt of a letter from Paris. It seemed to give me a learned importance, which placed me above all who had not Parisian correspondents. Believe that I shall carefully husband every scrap, which will save you the trouble of memory, when you come back. You cannot write things so trifling, let them only be about Paris, which I shall not treasure. In particular, I must have parallels of actors and actresses. I must be told if any building in Paris is at all comparable to St. Paul's, which, contrary to the usual mode of that part of our nature called admiration, I have looked up to with unfading wonder every morning at ten o'clock, ever since it has lain in my way to business. At noon I casually glance upon it, being hungry ; and hunger has not much taste for the fine arts. Is any night-walk comparable to a walk from St. Paul's to Charing Cross, for lighting and paving, crowds going and coming without respite, the rattle of coaches and the cheerfulness of shops? Have you seen a man guillotined yet ? is it as good as hanging ? are the women *all* painted, and the men *all* monkeys ? or are there not a *few* that look

like *rational* of *both sexes*? Are you and the First Consul *thick*? All this expense of ink I may fairly put you to, as your letters will not be solely for my proper pleasure, but are to serve as memoranda and notices, helps for short memory, a kind of Rumfordising recollection, for yourself on your return.

Your letter was just what a letter should be, crammed and very funny. Every part of it pleased me till you came to Paris; and your damn'd philosophical indolence or indifference stung me. You cannot stir from your rooms till you know the language! What the devil! — are men nothing but word-trumpets? are men all tongue and ear? have these creatures, that you and I profess to know *something about*, no faces, gestures, gabble: no folly, no absurdity, no induction of French education [eduction] upon the abstract idea of men and women, no similitude nor dissimilitude to English! Why! thou damn'd Smell-fungus! your account of your landing and reception, and *Bullen* (I forget how you spell it — it was spelt my way in Harry the Eighth's time), was exactly in that *minute* style which strong impressions INSPIRE (writing to a Frenchman, I write as a Frenchman would). It appears to me as if I should die with joy at the first landing in a foreign country. It is the nearest pleasure, which a grown man can substitute for that unknown one, which he can never know — the pleasure of the first entrance into life from the womb. I dare say, in



a short time, my habits would come back like a "stronger man" armed, and drive out that new pleasure; and I should soon sicken for known objects. Nothing has transpired here that seems to me of sufficient importance to send dry-shod over the water: but I suppose you will want to be told some news. The best and the worst to me is, that I have given up two guineas a week at the *Post*, and regained my health and spirits, which were upon the wane. I grew sick, and Stuart unsatisfied. *Ludisti satis, tempus abire est*; I must cut closer, that's all.

In all this time I have done but one thing, which I reckon tolerable, and that I will transcribe, because it may give you pleasure, being a picture of *my* humours. You will find it in my last page. It absurdly is a first Number of a series, thus strangled in its birth.

More news! The Professor's Rib has come out to be a damn'd disagreeable woman, so much [so] as to drive me and some more old cronies from his house. If a man will keep snakes in his house, he must not wonder if people are shy of coming to see him because of the snakes.

Mister Fell — or as you, with your usual faceteness [facetiousness] and drollery, call him, Mr. F + ll — has stopped short in the middle of his play, like what is called being taken short. Some *friend* has told him that it has not the least merit in it. Oh that I had the rectifying of the Litany! I would put in a *libera nos* (*Scriptores*

*videlicet*) *ab amicis*! That's all the news. *Apropos* (is it *pedantry*, writing to a Frenchman, to express myself sometimes by a French word, when an English one would not do as well? Methinks, my thoughts fall naturally into it) — *apropos*, I think you wrong about my play. *All* the omissions are *right*. And the supplementary scene, in which Sandford narrates the manner in which his master is affected, is the best in the book. It stands where a hodgepodge of German puerilities used to stand. I insist upon it that you like that scene. Love me, love that scene. I will now transcribe the *Londoner* (No. 1), and wind up all with affection and humble servant at the end. I write small in regard to your good eyesight. [*Here follows the essay called The Londoner, which will be found in Lamb's printed works.*]

“What is all this about?” said Mrs. Shandy. “A story of a cock and a bull,” said Yorick: and so it is; but Manning will take good-naturedly what *God will send him* across the water: only I hope he won't *shut* his eyes, and *open* his mouth, as the children say, for that is the way to *gape*, and not to *read*. Manning, continue your laudable purpose of making me your register. I will render back all your remarks; and *I, not you*, shall have received usury by having read them. In the meantime, may the Great Spirit have you in his keeping, and preserve our Englishmen from the inoculation of frivolity and sin upon French earth.

*Allons*, — or what is it you say, instead of *good-bye*?

Mary sends her kind remembrance, and covets the remarks equally with me.

C. LAMB

NOTE

[“Are you and the First Consul *thick*?” — Napoleon, with whom Manning was destined one day to be on terms. In 1803, on the declaration of war, when he wished to return to England, Manning’s was the only passport that Napoleon signed; again, in 1817, on returning from China, Manning was wrecked near St. Helena, and, waiting on the island for a ship, conversed there with the great exile. — E. V. LUCAS.]

CXX.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

16 Mitre Court Buildings, Inner Temple,  
April 10, 1802.

Dear Rickman, — The enclosed letter explains itself. It will save me the danger of a corporal interview with the man-eater, who, if very sharp-set, may take a fancy to me, if you will give me a short note, declaratory of probabilities. These from him who hopes to see you once or twice more before he goes hence, to be no more seen: for there is no tippie nor tobacco in the grave, whereunto he hasteneth.

C. LAMB

How clearly the Goul writes, and like a gentleman!

CXXI.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

September 8, 1802.

Dear Coleridge,— I thought of not writing till we had performed some of our commissions; but we have been hindered from setting about them, which yet shall be done to a tittle. We got home very pleasantly on Sunday. We had Miss Buck's company nearly all the way. Mary is a good deal fatigued, and finds the difference of going *to* a place, and coming *from* it. I feel that I shall remember your mountains to the last day I live. They haunt me perpetually. I am like a man who has been falling in love unknown to himself, which he finds out when he leaves the Lady. I do not remember any very strong impression while they were present; but, being gone, their mementos are shelved in my brain. We past a very pleasant little time with the Clarksons. Lloyd's hospitality is not extinct; it only was past into *them*. The Wordsworths are at Montague's rooms, near neighbours to us. They dined with us yesterday, and I was their guide to Bartlemy Fair!

I shall put your letter in the penny post, and shall always do so, if you have no objection, for I don't want to see Stuart, our Dissolution was rather ambiguous and I am not sure he is not displeased. I was pleased to recognise your Blank verse Poem (the Picture) in the *Morning Post* of Monday. It reads very well and I feel some dig-

nity in the notion of being able to understand it better than most Southern Readers.

I hope you got over the fatigue of Helvellin. I shall expect little notes now and then to accompany yours to Stuart, which will pay me for the pang I must feel! in defrauding the Company. Mind, if you think the Penny Post not safe or had otherwise rather I dropt 'em in myself, I will, but I hate to encounter that impudent Clerk.

I yesterday hunted about at Lockington's, &c., for Milton's *Prose Works*, which if I could have got reasonably I should have beg'd your acceptance. The only one I met with, the best Quarto, was 6 guineas — But I don't despair.

Observe the *Lambe* (but don't mark it) on those letters I am not to open.

My next letter I hope will contain some account of our commissions.

I am hurrying this off at my office where I am got for the first time to-day, and very awkward I feel and strange at Business. I forget the names of Books and feel myself not half so great a man as when I [was] a scrambler among mountains. I feel debased; but I shall soon break in my mountain spirit.

Particularly tell me about little *Pi-pos* (or flying Opossum) the only child (but one) I had ever an inclination to steal from its parents. That one was a Beggar's brat that I might have had cheap. I hope his little Rash has gone.



But don't be jealous. I have a very affectionate memory of you all, besides *Pi-pos*: but *Pipos* I especially love.

Remember me kindly to Hartley and Hartley's old friends at Greta Hall and very kindly to Sara. I may venture to add Mary's love, I am sure, tho' she does not sit beside me. Public offices scare away familiar faces and make ugly faces too familiar. Have you seen Stoddart and Allen. We past S. on the road.

God bless you all.

C. L.

CXXII.—TO MRS. GODWIN

[1802.]

Dear Mrs. G.,— Having observed with some concern that Mr. Godwin is a little fastidious in what he eats for supper, I herewith beg to present his palate with a piece of dried salmon. I am assured it is the best that swims in Trent. If you do not know how to dress it, allow me to add, that it should be cut in thin slices and boiled in paper *previously prepared in butter*. Wishing it exquisite, I remain, — much as before, yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

Some add *mashed potatoes*.

### CXXIII.—TO THOMAS MANNING<sup>1</sup>

London, September 24, 1802.

My dear Manning, — Since the date of my last letter, I have been a traveller. A strong desire seized me of visiting remote regions. My first impulse was to go and see Paris. It was a trivial objection to my aspiring mind, that I did not understand a word of the language, since I certainly intend some time in my life to see Paris, and equally certainly never intend to learn the language, therefore that could be no objection. However, I am very glad I did not go, because you had left Paris (I see) before I could have set out. I believe, Stoddart promising to go with me another year prevented that plan. My next scheme (for to my restless, ambitious mind London was become a bed of thorns) was to visit the far-famed Peak in Derbyshire, where the Devil sits, they say, without breeches. *This* my purer mind rejected as indelicate. And my final resolve was a tour to the Lakes. I set out with Mary to Keswick, without giving Coleridge any notice; for my time being precious did not admit of it. He received us with all the hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to shew us all the wonders of the country. He dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains:

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.

great floundering bears and monsters they seemed, all couchant and asleep. We got in in the evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunshine, which transmuted all the mountains into colours, purple, &c. &c. We thought we had got into Fairyland. But that went off (as it never came again, while we stayed; we had no more fine sunsets), and we entered Coleridge's comfortable study just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their heads. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight before, nor do I suppose that I can ever again. Glorious creatures, fine old fellows, Skiddaw, &c. I never shall forget ye, how ye lay about that night, like an intrenchment; gone to bed, as it seemed for the night, but promising that ye were to be seen in the morning. Coleridge had got a blazing fire in his study; which is a large, antique, ill-shaped room, with an old-fashioned organ, never played upon, big enough for a church, shelves of scattered folios, an Eolian harp, and an old sofa, half-bed, &c. And all looking out upon the last fading view of Skiddaw and his broad-breasted brethren: what a night! Here we stayed three full weeks, in which time I visited Wordsworth's cottage, where we stayed a day or two with the Clarksons (good people and most hospitable, at whose house we tarried one day and night), and saw Lloyd. [The] Wordsworths were gone to Calais. They have since been in London and past much time

with us: he is now gone into Yorkshire to be married to a girl of small fortune, but he is in expectation of augmenting his own, in consequence of the death of Lord Lonsdale, who kept him out of his own in conformity with a plan my lord had taken up in early life of making everybody unhappy.

So we have seen Keswick, Grasmere, Ambleside, Ulswater (where the Clarksons live), and a place at the other end of Ulswater; I forget the name: to which we travelled on a very sultry day, over the middle of Helvellyn. We have clambered up to the top of Skiddaw, and I have waded up the bed of Lodore. In fine, I have satisfied myself, that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before: they make such a spluttering about it, and toss their splendid epithets around them, till they give as dim a light as at four o'clock next morning the lamps do after an illumination. Mary was excessively tired, when she got about half-way up Skiddaw, but we came to a cold rill (than which nothing can be imagined more cold, running over cold stones), and with the reinforcement of a draught of cold water she surmounted it most manfully. O, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountains all about, and about, making you giddy; and then Scotland afar off, and the border countries so famous in song and ballad! It was a day that will stand out, like a mountain, I am sure, in my life.

But I am returned (I have now been come home near three weeks ; I was a month out), and you cannot conceive the degradation I felt at first, from being accustomed to wander free as air among mountains, and bathe in rivers without being controlled by any one, to come home and *work*. I felt very *little*. I had been dreaming I was a very great man. But that is going off, and I find I shall conform in time to that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me. Besides, after all, Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than among Skiddaw. Still, I turn back to those great places where I wandered about, participating in their greatness. After all, I could not *live* in Skiddaw. I could spend a year, two, three years among them, but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street at the end of that time, or I should mope and pine away, I know. Still, Skiddaw is a fine creature. My habits are changing, I think, *i. e.* from drunk to sober. Whether I shall be happier or no remains to be proved. I shall certainly be more happy in a morning ; but whether I shall not sacrifice the fat, and the marrow, and the kidneys, *i. e.* the night, the glorious care-drowning night, that heals all our wrongs, pours wine into our mortifications, changes the scene from indifferent and flat to bright and brilliant ! O Manning, if I should have formed a diabolical resolution, by the time you come to England, of not admitting any spirituous liquors into my house, will



you be my guest on such shameworthy terms? Is life, with such limitations, worth trying? The truth is, that my liquors bring a nest of friendly harpies about my house, who consume me. This is a pitiful tale to be read at St. Gothard; but it is just now nearest my heart. Fenwick is a ruined man. He is hiding himself from his creditors, and has sent his wife and children into the country. Fell, my other drunken companion (that has been: *nam hic caestus artemque repono*), is turned editor of a *Naval Chronicle*. Godwin (with a pitiful artificial wife) continues a steady friend, tho' the same facility does not remain of visiting him often. That bitch has detached Marshall from his house; Marshall, the man who went to sleep when the *Ancient Mariner* was reading: the old, steady, unalterable friend of the Professor.

Holcroft is not yet come to town. I expect to see him, and will deliver your message. [Two words here are obscure, but Mr. Lucas prints "How I hate"] *this part* of a letter. Things come crowding in to say, and no room for 'em. Some things are too little to be told, *i. e.* to have a preference; some are too big and circumstantial. Thanks for yours, which was most delicious. Would I had been with you, benighted, &c.! I fear my head is turned with wandering. I shall never be the same acquiescent being. Farewell; write again quickly, for I shall not like to hazard a letter, not knowing where the fates have carried you. Farewell, my dear fellow. C. LAMB

CXXIV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

October 9, 1802.

CAROLUS AGNUS COLERIDGIO SUO S.

Carissime, — Scribis, ut nummos scilicet epistolarios solvam et postremo in Tartara abeam : immo tu potius Tartaricum (ut aiunt) deprehendisti, qui me vernaculâ meâ linguâ pro scribâ conductitio per tot annos satis eleganter usum ad Latinè impure et canino fere ore latrandum per tuasmet epistolas benè compositas et concinnatas percellere studueris. Conabor tamen : Attamen vereor, ut *Ædes* istas nostri Christi, inter quas tantâ diligentîâ magistri improbâ [?improbi] bonis literulis, quasi per clysterem quendam iniectis, infrâ suprâque olim penitùs imbutus fui, Barnesii et Marklandii doctissimorum virorum nominibus adhuc gaudentes, barbarismis meis peregrinis et aliunde quaesitis valde dehonestavero [*sic*]. Sed pergere quocunque placet. Adeste igitur, quotquot estis, coniugationum declinationumve turmae, terribilia spectra, et tu imprimis ades, Umbra et Imago maxima obsoletæ (Diis gratiæ) Virgæ, quâ novissime in mentem receptâ, horrescunt subito natales [nates], et parum deest quo minùs braccas meas ultro usque ad crura demittam, et ipse puer pueriliter eiulem.

Ista tua Carmina Chamouniana satis grandia esse mihi constat ; sed hoc mihi nonnihil displicet, quòd in iis illae montium Grisosorum inter se responsiones totidem reboant anglicè, *God, God,*

haud aliter atque temet audivi tuas montes Cumbrianas resonare docentes, *Tod, Tod*, nempe Doctorem infelicem: vocem certe haud Deum sonantem. Pro caeteris plaudo.

Itidem comparationes istas tuas satis callidas et lepidas certè novi: sed quid hoc ad verum? cum illi Consulari viro et *mentem irritabilem* istam Iulianam: et etiam *astutias frigidulas* quasdam Augusto propriiores, nequaquam congruenter uno afflatu comparationis causâ insedis affirmaveris: necnon nescio quid similitudinis etiam cum Tiberio tertio in loco solícite produxeris. Quid tibi equidem cum uno vel altero Caesare, cùm universi Duodecim ad comparationes tuas se ultro tulerint? Praeterea, vetustati adnutans, comparationes iniquas odi.

Istas Wordsworthianas nuptias (vel potius cuiusdam *Edmundii* tui) te retulisse mirificum gaudeo. Valeas, Maria, fortunata nimium, et antiquae illae Mariae Virgini (comparatione plusquam Caesareanâ) forsitan comparanda, quoniam “beata inter mulieres:” et etiam fortasse Wordsworthium ipsum tuum maritum Angelo Salutatori aequare fas erit, quoniam e Coelo (ut ille) descendunt et Musae et ipsi Musicolae: at Wordsworthium Musarum observantissimum semper novi. Necnon te quoque affinitate hâc novâ, Dorothea, gratulor: et tu certe alterum *donum Dei*.

Istum Ludum, quem tu, Coleridgi, Americanum garris, a Ludo (ut Ludi sunt) maximè abhorrentem praetereo: nempe quid ad Ludum

attinet, totius illae gentis Columbianae, a nostrâ gente, eadem stirpe ortâ, ludi singuli causa voluntatem perperam alienare? Quaeso ego materiam ludi: tu Bella ingeris.

Denique valeas, et quid de Latinitate meâ putes, dicas: facias ut opossim illum nostrum volentem vel (ut tu malis) quendam Piscem errabundum, a me salvum et pulcherrimum esse iubeas. Valeant uxor tua cum Hartleii nostro. Soror mea salva est et ego: vos et ipsa salvere iubet. Ulterius progredi [? progredi] non liquet: homo sum aeratus.

P. S. — Pene mihi exciderat, apud me esse Librorum a Iohanno Milto Latino scriptorum volumina duo, quae (Deo volente) cum caeteris tuis libris ocyùs citiùs per Maria [?] ad te missura [*sic*] curabo; sed me in hoc tali genere rerum nullo modo *festinantem* novisti: habes confitentem reum. Hoc solum dici [*sic*] restat, praedicta volumina pulchra esse et omnia opera Latina I. M. in se continere. Circa defensionem istam Pro Popo. Anglo. acerrimam in praesens ipse praeclaro gaudio moror.

Iussa tua Stuartina faciam ut diligenter colam.

Iterum iterumque valeas:

Et facias memor sis nostri.

## NOTE

[The following translation is from the pen of Mr. Stephen Gwynn :

### CHARLES LAMB TO HIS FRIEND COLERIDGE, GREETING :

Dear Friend, — You write that I am to pay my debt, to wit in coin of correspondence, and finally that I am to go to Tartarus : no but it is you have caught a Tartar (as the saying is), since after all these years employing my own vernacular tongue, and prettily enough for a hired penman, you have set about to drive me by means of your well composed and neatly turned epistles to gross and almost doggish barking in the Latin. Still, I will try : And yet I fear that the Hostel of our Christ, — wherein by the exceeding diligence of a relentless master I was in days gone by deeply imbued from top to bottom with polite learning, instilled as it were by a clyster — which still glories in the names of the erudite Barnes and Markland, will be vilely dishonoured by my outlandish and adscititious barbarisms. But I am determined to proceed, no matter whither. Be with me therefore all ye troops of conjugations and declensions, dread spectres, and approach thou chiefest, Shade and Phantom of the disused (thank Heaven) Birch, at whose entry to my imagination a sudden shiver takes my rump, and a trifle then more would make me begin to let down my breeches to my calves, and turning boy, howl boyishly.

That your Ode at Chamounix is a fine thing I am clear ; but here is a thing offends me somewhat, that in the ode your answers of the Grison mountains to each other should so often echo in English God, God — in the very tone that I have heard your own lips teaching your Cumbrian mountains to resound Tod, Tod, meaning the unlucky doctor — a syllable assuredly of no Godlike sound. For the rest, I approve.

Moreover, I certainly recognise that your comparisons are acute and witty ; but what has this to do with truth ? since you have given to the great Consul at once that irritable mind of Julius, and also a kind of cold cunning, more proper to Augustus — attributing incongruous characteristics in one



breath for the sake of your comparison : nay, you have even in the third instance laboriously drawn out some likeness to Tiberius. What had you to do with one Cæsar, or a second, when the whole Twelve offered themselves to your comparison ? Moreover, I agree with antiquity, and think comparisons odious.

Your Wordsworth nuptials (or rather the nuptials of a certain Edmund of yours) fill me with joy in your report. May you prosper, Mary, fortunate beyond compare, and perchance comparable to that ancient Virgin Mary (a comparison more than Cæsarean) since "blessed art thou among women : " perhaps also it will be no impiety to compare Wordsworth himself your husband to the Angel of Salutation, since (like the angel) from heaven descend both Muses and the servants of the Muses : whose devoutest votary I always know Wordsworth to be. Congratulations to thee, Dorothea, in this new alliance : you also assuredly are another "gift of God."

As for your Ludus [Lloyd], whom you talk of as an "American," I pass him by as no sportsman (as sport goes) : what kind of sport is it, to alienate utterly the good will of the whole Columbian people, our own kin, sprung of the same stock, for the sake of one Ludd [Lloyd] ? I seek the material for diversion : you heap on War.

Finally, fare you well, and pray tell me what you think of my Latinity. Kindly wish health and beauty from me to our flying possum or (as you prefer to call it) roving Fish. Good health to your wife and my friend Hartley. My sister and I are well. She also sends you greeting. I do not see how to get on farther : I am a man in debt [or possibly in "fetters"].

P. S. — I had almost forgot, I have by me two volumes of the Latin writings of John Milton, which (D. V.) I will have sent you sooner or later by Mary : but you know me no way precipitate in this kind : the accused pleads guilty. This only remains to be said, that the aforesaid volumes are handsome and contain all the Latin works of J. M. At present I dwell with much delight on his vigorous defence of the English people.

I will be sure to observe diligently your Stuartial tidings.

Again and again farewell : and pray be mindful of me.]

CXXV. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

October 11, 1802.

Dear Coleridge, — Your offer about the German poems is exceedingly kind; but I do not think it a wise speculation, because the time it would take you to put them into prose would be nearly as great as if you versified them. Indeed, I am sure you could do the one nearly as soon as the other; so that, instead of a division of labour, it would be only a multiplication. But I will think of your offer in another light. I dare say I could find many things of a light nature to suit that paper, which you would not object to pass upon Stuart as your own, and I should come in for some light profits, and Stuart think the more highly of your assiduity. *Bishop Hall's Characters* I know nothing about, having never seen them. But I will reconsider your offer, which is very plausible; for as to the drudgery of going every day to an editor with my scraps, like a pedlar, for him to pick out, and tumble about my ribbons and posies, and to wait in his lobby, &c., no money could make up for the degradation. You are in too high request with him to have anything unpleasant of that sort to submit to.

It was quite a slip of my pen, in my Latin letter, when I told you I had Milton's *Latin Works*. I ought to have said his *Prose Works*, in two volumes, Birch's edition, containing all,

both Latin and English, a fuller and better edition than Lloyd's of Toland. It is completely at your service, and you must accept it from me; at the same time, I shall be much obliged to you for your Latin Milton, which you think you have at Howitt's; it will leave me nothing to wish for but the *History of England*, which I shall soon pick up for a trifle. But you must write me word whether the Miltons are worth paying carriage for. You have a Milton; but it is pleasanter to eat one's own peas out of one's own garden, than to buy them by the peck at Covent Garden; and a book reads the better, which is our own, and has been so long known to us, that we know the topography of its blots and dog's-ears, and can trace the dirt in it to having read it at tea with buttered muffins, or over a pipe, which I think is the maximum. But, Coleridge, you must accept these little things, and not think of returning money for them, for I do not set up for a factor or general agent. As for the fantastic debt of 15*l.*, I'll think you were dreaming, and not trouble myself seriously to attend to you. My bad Latin you properly correct; but *natales* for *nates* was an inadvertency: I knew better. *Progredi* or *progredi* I thought indifferent, my authority being Ainsworth. However, as I have got a fit of Latin, you will now and then indulge me with an *epistola*. I pay the postage of this, and propose doing it by turns. In that case I can now and then write to you without remorse; not that you would mind the money, but

you have not always ready cash to answer small demands, the *epistolarii nummi*.

Your *Epigram on the Sun and Moon in Germany* is admirable. Take 'em all together, they are as good as Harrington's. I will muster up all the conceits I can, and you shall have a packet some day. You and I together can answer all demands surely : you, mounted on a terrible charger (like Homer in the *Battle of the Books*) at the head of the cavalry : I will lead the light horse. I have just heard from Stoddart. Allen and he intend taking Keswick in their way home. Allen wished particularly to have it a secret that he is in Scotland, and wrote to me accordingly very urgently. As luck was, I had told not above three or four ; but Mary had told Mrs. Green of Christ's Hospital ! For the present, farewell : never forgetting love to Pi-pos and his friends.

C. LAMB

CXXVI.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE <sup>1</sup>

October 23, 1802.

Your kind offer I will not a second time refuse. You shall send me a packet, and I will do them into English with great care. Is not there one about *Wm. Tell*, and would not that in the present state of discussions be likely to *tell* ? The Epigrams I meant are to be found at the end of

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.

Harrington's Translation of *Orlando Furioso* : if you could get the book they would some of them answer your purpose to modernize. If you can't, I fancy I can. Baxter's *Holy Commonwealth* I have luckily met with, and when I have sent it you shall if you please consider yourself indebted to me  $\frac{3}{6}$ , the cost of it : especially as I purchased it after your solemn injunctions.

The plain case with regard to my presents (which you seem so to shrink from) is that I have not at all affected the character of a Donor, or thought of violating your sacred law of Give and Take : but I have been *taking* and partaking the good things of your House (when I know you were not over-abounding) and now *give* unto you of mine : and by the grace of God I happen to be myself a little super-abundant at present. I expect I shall be able to send you my final parcel in about a week ; by that time I shall have gone through all Milton's Latin works. There will come with it the *Holy Commonwealth*, and the identical North American Bible which you helped to dogs-ear at Xt's. I called at Howell's for your little Milton, and also to fetch away the White Cross Street Library Books, which I have not forgot : but your books were not in a state to be got at then, and Mrs. H. is to let me know when she packs up. They will be sent by sea ; and my little precursor will come to you by the Whitehaven waggon, accompanied with pens, penknife, &c. Mrs. Howell was as



usual very civil; and asked with great earnestness if it were likely you would come to town in the winter—she has a friendly eye upon you.

I read daily your political essays. I was particularly pleased with *Once a Jacobin*: though the argument is obvious enough, the style was less swelling than your things sometimes are, and it was plausible *ad populum*. A vessel has just arrived from Jamaica with the news of poor Sam Le Grice's death. He died at Jamaica of the yellow fever. His course was rapid, and he had been very foolish; but I believe there was more of kindness and warmth in him than in almost any other of our schoolfellows. I have had no account a long time of Favell. The annual meeting of the Blues is to-morrow, at the London Tavern, where poor Sammy dined with them two years ago, and attracted the notice of all by the singular foppishness of his dress. When men go off the stage so early, it scarce seems a noticeable thing in their epitaphs, whether they had been wise or silly in their lifetime.

I am glad the snuff and Pi-pos's books please. *Goody Two Shoes* is almost out of print. Mrs. Barbauld's stuff has banished all the old classics of the nursery; and the shopman at Newberry's hardly deigned to reach them off an old exploded corner of a shelf, when Mary asked for them. Mrs. B.'s and Mrs. Trimmer's nonsense lay in piles about. Knowledge insignificant and vapid as Mrs. B.'s books convey, it seems, must come

to a child in the *shape* of *knowledge*, and his empty noddle must be turned with conceit of his own powers when he has learnt that a horse is an animal, and Billy is better than a horse, and such like ; instead of that beautiful interest in wild tales, which made the child a man, while all the time he suspected himself to be no bigger than a child. Science has succeeded to poetry no less in the little walks of children than with men. Is there no possibility of averting this sore evil ? Think what you would have been now, if instead of being fed with Tales and old wives' fables in childhood, you had been crammed with geography and Natural History !

Damn them ! — I mean the cursed Barbauld crew, those Blights and Blasts of all that is Human in man and child.

As to the translations, let me do two or three hundred lines, and then do you try the nostrums upon Stuart in any way you please. If they go down, I will brave more. In fact, if I got or could but get 50*l.* a year only, in addition to what I have, I should live in affluence.

Have you anticipated it, or could not you give a Parallel of Buonaparte with Cromwell, particularly as to the contrast in their deeds affecting *foreign* states ? Cromwell's interference for the Albigenses, B[uonaparte]'s against the Swiss. Then religion would come in ; and Milton and you could rant about our countrymen of that period. This is a hasty suggestion, the more hasty be-

cause I want my supper. I have just finished Chapman's *Homer*. Did you ever read it? it has most the continuous power of interesting you all along, like a rapid original, of any; and in the uncommon excellence of the more finished parts goes beyond Fairfax or any of 'em. The metre is fourteen syllables, and capable of all sweetness and grandeur. Cowper's damned blank verse detains you every step with some heavy Miltonism; Chapman gallops off with you his own free pace. Take a simile for an example. The council breaks up, —

Being abroad, the earth was overlaid  
With flockers to them, that came forth : as when of frequent  
bees  
Swarms rise out of a hollow rock, repairing the degrees  
*Of their egression endlessly, with ever rising new*  
From forth their sweet nest; as their store, still as it faded,  
grew,  
*And never would cease sending forth her clusters to the spring,*  
They still crowd out so; this flock here, that there, belabouring  
The loaded flowers. So, &c. &c.

What *endless egression of phrases* the Dog commands!

Take another: Agamemnon wounded, bearing his wound heroically for the sake of the army (look below) to a woman in Labour.

He, with his lance, sword, mighty stones, pour'd his heroic  
wreak  
On other squadrons of the foe, whiles yet warm blood did  
break  
Thro' his cleft veins; but when the wound was quite exhaust  
and crude,

The eager anguish did approve his princely fortitude.  
As when most sharp and bitter pangs distract a labouring dame,  
Which the divine Ilithiæ, that rule the painful frame  
Of human childbirth, pour on her; the Ilithiæ that are  
The daughters of Saturnia; with whose extreme repair  
The woman in her travail strives to take the worst it gives;  
With thought, it *must be, 'tis Love's fruit, the end for which she*  
*lives;*  
*The mean to make herself new born, what comforts will redound:*  
So, &c.

I will tell you more about Chapman and his peculiarities in my next. I am much interested in him.

Yours ever affectionately, and Pi-Pos's, &c.,  
C. L.

#### CXXVII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

November 4, 1802.

Observe, there comes to you, by the Kendal waggon to-morrow, the illustrious fifth of November, a box, containing the Miltons, the strange American Bible, with White's brief note, to which you will attend; Baxter's *Holy Commonwealth*, for which you stand indebted to me 3*s.* 6*d.*; an odd volume of Montaigne, being of no use to me, I having the whole; certain books belonging to Wordsworth, as do also the strange thick-hoofed shoes, which are very much admired at in London. All these sundries I commend to your most strenuous looking after. If you find the Miltons in certain parts dirtied and soiled with a crumb

of right Gloucester blacked in the candle (my usual supper), or peradventure a stray ash of tobacco wafted into the crevices, look to that passage more especially: depend upon it, it contains good matter. I have got your little Milton which, as it contains Salmasius — and I make a rule of never hearing but one side of the question (why should I distract myself?) — I shall return to you when I pick up the *Latina opera*. The first *Defence* is the greatest work among them, because it is uniformly great, and such as is befitting the very mouth of a great nation speaking for itself. But the second *Defence*, which is but a succession of splendid episodes slightly tied together, has one passage which if you have not read, I conjure you to lose no time, but read it; it is his consolations in his blindness, which had been made a reproach to him. It begins whimsically, with poetical flourishes about Tiresias and other blind worthies (which still are mainly interesting as displaying his singular mind, and in what degree poetry entered into his daily soul, not by fits and impulses, but engrained and innate); but the concluding page, *i.e.* of *this passage* (not of the *Defensio*) which you will easily find, divested of all brags and flourishes, gives so rational, so true an enumeration of his comforts, so human, that it cannot be read without the deepest interest. Take one touch of the religious part: “Et sane haud ultima Dei cura caeci — (*we blind folks*, I understand it not *nos* for *ego*) —



sumus ; qui nos, quominus quicquam aliud praeter ipsum cernere valemus, eo clementius atque benignius respicere dignatur. Vae qui illudit nos, vae qui laedit, execratione publica devovendo ; nos ab injuriis hominum non modo incolumes, sed pene sacros divina lex reddidit, divinus favor : nec tam *oculorum bebetudine* quam *coelestium alarum umbrâ* has nobis fecisse tenebras videtur, factas illustrare rursus interiore ac longe praestabiliore lumine haud raro solet. Huc refero, quod et amici officiosius nunc etiam quam solebant, colunt, observant, adsunt ; quod et nonnulli sunt, quibuscum Pyladeas atque Theseas alternare voces verorum amicorum liceat.

Vade gubernaculum mei pedis.

Da manum ministro amico.

Da collo manum tuam, ductor autem viae ero tibi ego.

[The following is a translation of the Latin passage by Robert Fellowes, which Mr. Lucas has included in his recent edition :

And indeed, in my blindness, I enjoy in no inconsiderable degree the favour of the Deity ; who regards me with more tenderness and compassion in proportion as I am able to behold nothing but himself. Alas ! for him who insults me, who maligns and merits public execration ! For the divine law not only shields me from injury, but almost renders me too sacred to attack ; not indeed so much from the privation of my sight, as from the overshadowing of those heavenly wings, which seem to have occasioned this obscurity ; and which, when occasioned, he is wont to illuminate with an interior light, more precious and more pure. To this I ascribe the more tender assiduities of my friends, their soothing attentions, their kind visits, their reverential observances ; among whom there are some with whom I may interchange the Pyladean and Thesean dialogue of inseparable friends.

Proceed, and be rudder of my feet ;  
Lend your hand to your devoted friend.  
Throw your arm around my neck, and  
I will conduct you on the way.]

All this, and much more, is highly pleasing to know. But you may easily find it; — and I don't know why I put down so many words about it, but for the pleasure of writing to you and the want of another topic.

Yours ever,

C. LAMB

To-morrow I expect with anxiety S. T. C.'s letter to Mr. Fox.

CXXVIII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

[November, 1802.]

My dear Manning, — I must positively write, or I shall miss you at Toulouse. I sit here like a decayed minute hand (I lie; *that* does not *sit*), and being myself the exponent of no time, take no heed how the clocks about me are going. You possibly by this time may have explored all Italy, and toppled, unawares, into Etna, while you went too near those rotten-jawed, gap-toothed, old worn-out chops of hell, — while I am meditating a quiescent letter to the honest postmaster of Toulouse. But in case you should not have been *felo de se*, this is to tell you that your letter was quite to my palate — in particular your just remarks upon Industry, damned Industry (though indeed you left me to explore the reason), were highly relishing.

I've often wished I liv'd in the Golden Age,

when shepherds lay stretched upon flowers, and loused themselves at their leisure, — the genius there is in a man's natural idle face, that has not learned his multiplication table! before doubt, and propositions, and corollaries, got into the world!

Now, as Joseph Cottle, a Bard of Nature, sings, going up Malvern Hills, —

How steep! how painful the ascent!  
It needs the evidence of *close deduction*  
To know that ever I shall gain the top.

You must know that Joe is lame, so that he had some reason for so singing. These two lines, I assure you, are taken *totidem literis* from a very popular poem. Joe is also an epic poet as well as a descriptive, and has written a tragedy, though both his drama and epopoiea are strictly *descriptive*, and chiefly of the *Beauties of Nature*, for Joe thinks *man* with all his passions and frailties not a proper subject of the *drama*. Joe's tragedy hath the following surpassing speech in it. Some king is told that his enemy has engaged twelve archers to come over in a boat from an enemy's country and waylay him; he thereupon pathetically exclaims, —

*Twelve* dost thou say? Curse on those dozen villains!

Cottle read two or three acts out to us, very gravely on both sides, till he came to this heroic touch, — and then he asked what we laughed at? I had no more muscles that day. A poet that chooses to read out his own verses has but a limited power

over you. There is a bound where his authority ceases.

*Apropos*, if you should go to Florence or to Rome, inquire what works are extant in gold, silver, bronze, or marble, of Benvenuto Cellini, a Florentine artist, whose Life doubtless, you have read ; or, if not, without controversy you must read : so hark ye, send for it immediately from Lane's circulating library. It is always put among the romances, very properly ; but you have read it, I suppose. In particular, inquire at Florence for his colossal bronze statue (in the Grand Square or somewhere) of Perseus. You may read the story in Tooke's *Pantheon*.

Nothing material has *transpired* in these parts. Coleridge has indited a violent philippic against Mr. Fox in the *Morning Post*, which is a compound of expressions of humility, gentlemen-ushering-in most arrogant charges. It will do Mr. Fox no real injury among those that know him.

[*The signature of this letter has been torn off.*]

#### CXXIX. — TO THOMAS MANNING

[February 19, 1803.]

My dear Manning, — The general scope of your letter afforded no indications of insanity, but some particular points raised a scruple. For God's sake don't think any more of "Independent Tartary." What have you to do among such

Ethiopians? Is there no *lineal descendant* of Prester John?

Is the chair empty? Is the sword unswayed? — depend upon 't they 'll never make you their king, as long as any branch of that great stock is remaining. I tremble for your Christianity. They 'll certainly circumcise you. Read Sir John Maundevill's travels to cure you, or come over to England. There is a Tartar-man now exhibiting at Exeter Change. Come and talk with him, and hear what he says first. Indeed, he is no very favorable specimen of his countrymen! But perhaps the best thing you can do, is to *try* to get the idea out of your head. For this purpose repeat to yourself every night, after you have said your prayers, the words Independent Tartary, Independent Tartary, two or three times, and associate with them the *idea of oblivion* ('t is Hartley's method with obstinate memories), or say, Independent, Independent, have I not already got an *Independence*? That was a clever way of the old puritans — pun-divinity. My dear friend, think what a sad pity it would be to bury such *parts* in heathen countries, among nasty, unconvertible, horse-belching, Tartar people! Some say, they are cannibals; and then conceive a Tartar-fellow *eating* my friend, and adding the *cool malignity* of mustard and vinegar! I am afraid 't is the reading of Chaucer has misled you; his foolish stories about Cambuscan and the ring, and the horse of brass. Believe me, there 's no such things, 't is



all the poet's *invention*; but if there were such *darling* things as old Chaucer sings, I would *up* behind you on the Horse of Brass, and frisk off for Prester John's Country. But these are all tales; a Horse of Brass never flew, and a King's daughter never talked with Birds! The Tartars, really, are a cold, insipid, smouchy set. You'll be sadly moped (if you are not eaten) among them. Pray *try* and cure yourself. Take hellebore (the counsel is Horace's, 't was none of my thought *originally*). Shave yourself oftener. Eat no saffron, for saffron-eaters contract a terrible Tartar-like yellow. Pray, to avoid the fiend. Eat nothing that gives the heartburn. *Shave the upper lip*. Go about like a European. Read no books of voyages (they're nothing but lies): only now and then a romance, to keep the fancy *under*. Above all, don't go to any sights of *wild beasts*. *That has been your ruin*. Accustom yourself to write familiar letters on common subjects to your friends in England, such as are of a moderate understanding. And think about common things more. There's your friend Holcroft, now, has written a play. You used to be fond of the drama. Nobody went to see it. Notwithstanding this, with an audacity perfectly original, he faces the town down in a preface, that they *did like* it very much. I have heard a waspish punster say, "Sir, why did you not laugh at my jest?" But for a man boldly to face me out with, "Sir, I maintain it, you did laugh at my jest," is a little too

much. I have seen H. but once. He spoke of you to me in honorable terms. H. seems to me to be drearily dull. Godwin is dull, but then he has a dash of affectation, which smacks of the coxcomb, and your coxcombs are always agreeable.

I supped last night with Rickman, and met a merry *natural* captain, who pleases himself vastly with once having made a pun at Otaheite in the O. language. 'T is the same man who said Shakspeare he liked, because he was so *much of the gentleman*. Rickman is a man "absolute in all numbers." I think I may one day bring you acquainted, if you do not go to Tartary first; for you 'll never come back. Have a care, my dear friend, of anthropophagi! their stomachs are always craving. But if you do go among [them] pray contrive to *stink* as soon as you can that you may [not] hang a [on] hand at the butcher's. 'T is terrible to be weighed out for 5*d.* a-pound. To sit at table (the reverse of fishes in Holland), not as a guest, but as a meat.

God bless you: do come to England. Air and exercise may do great things. Talk with some minister. Why not your father?

God dispose all for the best. I have discharged my duty.

Your sincere friend,

C. LAMB

CXXX.—TO THOMAS MANNING

March, 1803.

Dear Manning,— I send you some verses I have made on the death of a young Quaker you may have heard me speak of as being in love with for some years while I lived at Pentonville, though I had never spoken to her in my life. She died about a month since. If you have interest with the Abbé de Lisle, you may get 'em translated: he has done as much for the *Georgics*.

HESTER

When maidens such as Hester die,  
Their place ye may not well supply,  
Though ye among a thousand try,  
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead,  
Yet cannot I by force be led  
To think upon the wormy bed,  
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,  
A rising step, did indicate  
Of pride and joy no common rate,  
That flush'd her spirit.

I know not by what name beside  
I shall it call:— if 't was not pride,  
It was a joy to that allied  
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,  
Which doth the human feeling cool,

But she was train'd in Nature's school,  
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,  
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind,  
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,  
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour, gone before  
To that unknown and silent shore,  
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,  
Some summer morning,

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray  
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,  
A bliss that would not go away,  
A sweet forewarning?

#### CXXXI.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

March 5, 1803.

Dear Wordsworth, — Having a guinea of your sister's left in hand, after all your commissions, and as it does not seem likely that you will trouble us, as the phrase is, for some time to come, I send you a pound note, and with it the best things in the verse way I have lit upon for many a day. I believe they will be new to you. You know Cotton, who wrote a second part to Walton's *Angler*. A volume of his *Miscellaneous Poems* is scarce. Take what follows from a poem call'd *Winter*. I omit twenty verses, in which a storm is described, to hasten to the best, —

Louder, and louder, still they<sup>1</sup> come,  
 Nile's Cataracts to these are dumb,  
 The Cyclops to these Blades are still,  
 Whose anvils shake the burning hill.

Were all the stars-enlighten'd skies  
 As full of ears, as sparkling eyes,  
 This rattle in the crystal hall  
 Would be enough to deaf them all.

What monstrous Race is hither tost,  
 Thus to alarm our British Coast,  
 With outcries such as never yet  
 War, or confusion, could beget?

Oh! now I know them, let us home,  
 Our mortal Enemy is come,  
 Winter, and all his blust'ring train  
 Have made a voyage o'er the main.

With bleak, and with congealing winds,  
 The earth in shining chain he binds;  
 And still as he doth further pass,  
 Quarries his way with liquid glass.

Hark! how the Blusterers of the Bear  
 Their gibbous Cheeks in triumph bear,  
 And with continued shouts do ring  
 The entry of their palsied king!

The squadron, nearest to your eye,  
 Is his forlorn of Infantry,  
 Bowmen of unrelenting minds,  
 Whose shafts are feather'd with the winds.

<sup>1</sup> The winds.



Now you may see his vanguard rise  
Above the earthy precipice,  
Bold Horse, on bleakest mountains bred,  
With hail, instead of provend, fed.

Their lances are the pointed locks,  
Torn from the brows of frozen rocks,  
Their shields are crystal as their swords,  
The steel the rusted rock affords.

See, the Main Body now appears !  
And hark ! th' Æolian Trumpeters.  
By their hoarse levets do declare,  
That the bold General rides there.

And look where mantled up in white  
He sleds it, like the Muscovite.  
I know him by the port he bears,  
And his lifeguard of mountaineers.

Their caps are furr'd with hoary frosts,  
The bravery their cold kingdom boasts ;  
Their spungy plads are milk-white frieze,  
Spun from the snowy mountain's fleece.

Their partizans are fine carv'd glass,  
Fring'd with the morning's spangled grass ;  
And pendant by their brawny thighs  
Hang cimetars of burnish'd ice.

Fly, fly, the foe advances fast,  
Into our fortress let us haste,  
Where all the roarers of the north  
Can neither storm, nor starve, us forth.

There under ground a magazine  
Of sovran juice is cellar'd in,  
Liquor that will the siege maintain,  
Should Phæbus ne'er return again.

'T is that, that gives the poet rage,  
And thaws the jellied blood of age,  
Matures the young, restores the old,  
And makes the fainting coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,  
Calms palpitations in the breast,  
Renders our lives' misfortunes sweet,  
And Venus frolic in the sheet.

Then let the chill Scirocco blow,  
And gird us round with hills of snow,  
Or else go whistle to the shore,  
And make the hollow mountains roar.

Whilst we together jovial sit,  
Careless, and crown'd with mirth and wit,  
Where tho' bleak winds confine us home,  
Our fancies thro' the world shall roam.

We'll think of all the friends we know,  
And drink to all, worth drinking to ;  
When, having drunk all thine and mine,  
We rather shall want health than wine !

But, where friends fail us, we'll supply  
Our friendships with our Charity.  
Men that remote in sorrows live  
Shall by our lusty bumpers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,  
And those that languish into health,  
Th' afflicted into joy, th' opprest  
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find  
Favour return again more kind,  
And in restraint who stifled lie,  
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,  
The lovers shall have mistresses,  
Poor unregarded virtue praise,  
And the neglected Poet bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,  
While we ourselves do all we would,  
For freed from envy and from care,  
What would we be but what we are?

'T is the plump Grape's immortal juice,  
That does this happiness produce,  
And will preserve us free together,  
Maugre mischance, or wind and weather.

Then let old Winter take his course,  
And roar abroad till he be hoarse,  
And his lungs crack with ruthless ire,  
It shall but serve to blow our fire.

Let him our little castle ply  
With all his loud artillery,  
Whilst sack and claret man the fort,  
His fury shall become our sport.

Or let him Scotland take, and there  
Confine the plotting Presbyter;  
His zeal may freeze, whilst we kept warm  
With love and wine can know no harm.

How could Burns miss the series of lines from  
[stanzas] 42 to 49?

There is also a long poem from the Latin on  
the inconveniences of old age. I can't set down  
the whole, tho' right worthy, having dedicated  
the remainder of my sheet to something else. I  
just excerpt here and there, to convince you, if  
after this you need it, that Cotton was a first-

rate. 'T is old Gallus speaks of himself, once the  
delight of the ladies and gallants of Rome, —

The beauty of my shape and face are fled,  
And my revolted form bespeaks me dead,  
For fair and shining age has now put on  
A bloodless, funeral complexion.  
My skin 's dry'd up, my nerves unpliant are,  
And my poor limbs my nails plow up and tear.  
My chearful eyes now with a constant spring  
Of tears bewail their own sad suffering;  
And those soft lids, that once secured my eye,  
Now rude and bristled grown, do drooping lie,  
Bolting mine eyes, as in a gloomy cave,  
Which there on furies and grim objects rave.  
'T would fright the full-blown gallant to behold  
The dying object of a man so old.  
And can you think that once a man he was  
Of human reason who no portion has.  
The letters split when I consult my book,  
And every leaf I turn does broader look.  
In darkness do I dream I see the light,  
When light is darkness to my perish'd sight.

. . . . .  
Is it not hard we may not from men's eyes  
Cloak and conceal Age's indecencies?  
Unseeming spruceness th' old man discommends,  
And, in old men, only to live offends.

. . . . .  
How can I him a living man believe,  
Whom light, and air, by whom he panteth, grieve?  
The gentle sleeps, which other mortals ease,  
Scarce in a winter's night my eyelids seize.

. . . . .  
The boys, and girls, deride me now forlorn,  
And but to call me Sir, now think it scorn,  
They jeer my count'nance and my feeble pace,  
And scoff that nodding head, that awful was.

A song written by Cowper, which in style is much above his usual, and emulates in noble plainness any old ballad I have seen. Hayley has just published it, &c., with a Life. I did not think Cowper *up* to it, —

SONG

ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE

Toll for the Brave !  
The Brave, that are no more !  
All sunk beneath the wave,  
Fast by their native shore. —

Eight hundred of the Brave,  
Whose courage well was tried,  
Had made the vessel heel,  
And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,  
And she was overset ;  
Down went the Royal George,  
With all her sails complete.

Toll for the Brave !  
Brave Kempenfelt is gone :  
His last sea-fight is fought ;  
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle,  
No tempest gave the shock ;  
She sprang no fatal leak ;  
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath ;  
His fingers held the pen,  
When Kempenfelt went down,  
With twice four hundred men.



Weigh the vessel up !  
Once dreaded by our foes !  
And mingle with the cup  
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,  
And she may float again,  
Full charg'd with England's thunder,  
And plow the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,  
His victories are o'er ;  
And he, and his eight hundred,  
Shall plow the wave no more.

In your obscure part of the world, which I  
take to be *Ultima Thule*, I thought these verses  
out of Books which cannot be accessible would  
not be unwelcome. Having room, I will put in  
an Epitaph I writ for a *real occasion*, a year or  
two back, —

ON MARY DRUIT WHO DIED AGED 19

Under this cold marble stone  
Sleep the sad remains of One,  
Who, when alive, by few or none

Was lov'd, as lov'd she might have been,  
If she prosp'rous days had seen,  
Or had thriving been, I ween.

Only this cold funeral stone  
Tells, she was belov'd by One,  
Who on the marble graves his moan.

I conclude with love to your sister and Mrs. W.  
Yours affect'y,

C. LAMB

Mary sends love, &c.

On consulting Mary, I find it will be foolish inserting the note as I intended, being so small, and as it is possible you *may* have to *trouble* us again ere long ; so it shall remain to be settled hereafter. However, the verses shan't be lost.

N. B. — All orders executed with fidelity and punctuality by C. & M. Lamb.

[*On the outside is written :*] I beg to open this for a minute to add my remembrances to you all, and to assure you I shall ever be happy to hear from or see, much more to be useful to any of my old friends at Grasmere. J. STODDART

A *lean* paragraph of the Doctor's.

C. LAMB

## CXXXII. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

March 20, 1803.

Mary sends love from home.

Dr C., — I do confess that I have not sent your books as I ought to be [have] done ; but you know how the human freewill is tethered, and that we perform promises to ourselves no better than to our friends. A watch is come for you. Do you want it soon, or shall I wait till some one travels your way? You, like me, I suppose, reckon the lapse of time from the waste thereof, as boys let a cock run to waste : too idle to stop it, and rather amused with seeing it dribble.

Your poems have begun printing ; Longman sent to me to arrange them, the old and the new together. It seems you have left it to him. So I classed them, as nearly as I could, according to dates. First, after the Dedication (which must march first), and which I have transplanted from before the Preface (which stood like a dead wall of prose between), to be the first Poem — then comes *The Pixies*, and the things most juvenile ; then on *To Chatterton*, &c. — on, lastly, to the *Ode on the Departing Year*, and *Musings*, — which finish. Longman wanted the Ode first, but the arrangement I have made is precisely that marked out in the Dedication, following the order of time. I told L[ongman] I was sure that you would omit a good portion of the first edition. I instanced in several sonnets, &c. ; but that was not his plan, and, as you have done nothing in it, all I could do was to arrange 'em on the supposition that all were to be retained. A few I positively rejected ; such as that of *The Thimble*, and that of *Flicker and Flicker's Wife*, and that *not* in the manner of Spenser, which you yourself had stigmatised — and *The Man of Ross*, — I doubt whether I should this last. It is not too late to save it. The first proof is only just come. I have been forced to call that Cupid's Elixir *Kisses*. It stands in your first volume as an Effusion, so that instead of prefixing *The Kiss* to that of *One Kiss, dear Maid*, &c., I have ventured to entitle it, *To Sara*. I am aware of the nicety of changing even so

mere a trifle as a title to so short a piece, and subverting old associations; but two called *Kisses* would have been absolutely ludicrous, and *Effusion* is no name, and these poems come close together. I promise you not to alter one word in any poem whatever, but to take your last text, where two are. Can you send any wishes about the book? Longman, I think, should have settled with you; but it seems you have left it to him. Write as soon as you possibly can; for, without making myself responsible, I feel myself in some sort accessory to the selection which I am to proof-correct. But I decidedly said to Biggs that I was sure you would omit more. Those I have positively rubbed off I can swear to *individually* (except *The Man of Ross*, which is too familiar in Pope), but no others — you have your cue. For my part, I had rather all the *Juvenilia* were kept — *memoriae causâ*.

Rob[ert] Lloyd has written me a masterly letter, containing a character of his father. See how different from Charles he views the old man! *Literatim*: “My father smokes, repeats Homer in Greek, and Virgil, and is learning, when from business, with all the vigour of a young man, Italian. He is really a wonderful man. He mixes public and private business, the intricacies of discordant life with his religion and devotion. No one more rationally enjoys the romantic scenes of nature, and the chit-chat and little vagaries of his children; and, though surrounded with an

ocean of affairs, the very neatness of his most obscure cupboard in the house passes not unnoticed. I never knew any one view with such clearness, nor so well satisfied with things as they are, and make such allowance for things which must appear perfect Syriac to him." By the last he means the Lloydisms of the younger branches. His portrait of Charles (exact as far as he has had opportunities of noting him) is most exquisite: "Charles is become steady as a church, and as straitforward as a Roman road. It would distract him to mention anything that was not as plain as sense. He seems to have run the whole scenery of life, and now rests as the formal precisian of non-existence." Here is genius I think, and 't is seldom a young man, a Lloyd, looks at a father (so differing) with such good nature while he is alive. Write—

I am in post-haste.

Love, &c., to Sara, P. and H.

### CXXXIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

April 13, 1803.

My dear Coleridge, — Things have gone on better with me since you left me. I expect to have my old housekeeper home again in a week or two. She has mended most rapidly. My health too has been better since you took away that Montero cap. I have left off cayenned eggs and such bolsters to discomfort. There was death in



that cap. I mischievously wished that by some inauspicious jolt the whole contents might be shaken, and the coach set on fire; for you said they had that property. How the old gentleman, who joined you at Grantham, would have clapt his hands to his knees, and not knowing but it was an immediate visitation of God that burnt him, how pious it would have made him! — him, I mean, that brought the influenza with him, and only took places for one — a damned old sinner; he must have known what he had got with him! However, I wish the cap no harm for the sake of the *head it fits*, and could be content to see it disfigure my healthy sideboard again. [Three lines obliterated by author.]

What do you think of smoking? I want your sober, *average, noon opinion* of it. I generally am eating my dinner about the time I should determine it. [Three more lines obliterated.]

Morning is a girl, and can't smoke — she's no evidence one way or other; and Night is so evidently *bought over*, that *he* can't be a very upright judge. Maybe the truth is, that *one* pipe is wholesome; *two* pipes toothsome; *three* pipes noisome; *four* pipes fulsome; *five* pipes quarrelsome, and that's the *sum* on 't. But that is deciding rather upon rhyme than reason. After all, our instincts *may* be best. Wine, I am sure, good, mellow, generous, Port, can hurt nobody, unless they take it to excess, which they may easily avoid if they observe the rules of temperance.

Bless you, old Sophist, who next to Human Nature taught me all the corruption I was capable of knowing! And bless your Montero Cap, and your trail (which shall come after you whenever you appoint), and your wife and children — Pipos especially.

When shall we two smoke again? Last night I had been in a sad quandary of spirits, in what they call the evening; but a pipe, and some generous Port, and *King Lear* (being alone), had [their] effects as its remonstrance. I went to bed pot-valiant. By the way, may not the Ogles of Somersetshire be remotely descended from King Lear?

Love to Sarah, and ask her what gown she means by saying that Mary has got of hers. I know of none but what went with Miss Wordsworth's things to Wordsworth, and was paid for out of their money. I allude to a part which I may have read imperfectly in a letter of hers to you.

C. L.

#### CXXXIV.—TO THOMAS MANNING<sup>1</sup>

May 1, 1803.

My dear Manning, — Although something of the latest, and after two months' waiting, your letter was highly gratifying. Some parts want a

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.

little explication ; for example, “the god-like face of the first consul.” *What god* does he most resemble, Mars, Bacchus, or Apollo? or the god Serapis, who, flying (as Egyptian chronicles deliver) from the fury of the Dog Anubis (the hieroglyph of an English mastiff), lighted on Monomotapa (or the Land of Apes), by some thought to be Old France, and there set up a tyranny, &c. Our London prints of him represent him gloomy and sulky, like an angry Jupiter. I hear that he is very small, even less than me, who am “less than the least of the Apostles,” at least than they are painted in the Vatican. I envy you your access to this Great Man, much more than your *séances* and *conversations*, which I have a shrewd suspicion must be something dull.

What you assert concerning the actors of Paris, that they exceed our comedians, “bad as ours are,” is *impossible*. In one sense it may be true, that their fine gentlemen, in what is called genteel comedy, may possibly be more brisk and *dégagé* than Mister Caulfield or Mr. Whitfield ; but have any of ’em the power to move *laughter in excess*? or can a Frenchman *laugh*? Can they batter at your judicious ribs till they *shake*, nothing loth to be so shaken? This is John Bull’s criterion, and it shall be mine. You are Frenchified. Both your tastes and morals are corrupt and perverted. Bye-and-bye you will come to assert, that Bonaparte is as great a general as the old Duke of Cumberland, and deny that one Eng-

lishman can beat three Frenchmen. Read *Henry the Fifth* to restore your orthodoxy.

All things continue at a stay-still in London. I cannot repay your new novelties with my stale reminiscences. Like the prodigal, I have spent my patrimony, and feed upon the superannuated chaff and dry husks of repentance; yet sometimes I remember with pleasure the hounds and horses, which I kept in the days of my prodigality. I find nothing new, nor anything that has so much of the gloss and dazzle of novelty, as may rebound in narrative, and cast a reflective glimmer across the channel. Something I will say about people that you and I know. Fenwick is still in debt, and the Professor has not done making love to his new spouse. I think he never looks in[to] an almanac, or he would have found by the calendar that the Honeymoon was extinct a moon ago. Lloyd has written to me, and names you. I think a letter from Maison Magnan (is *that* a Person or a Thing?) would gratify him. G. Dyer is in love with an idiot, who loves a doctor, who is incapable of loving anything but himself,—a puzzling circle of perverse providences! a maze as un-get-out-again-able as the house which Jack built.

Southey is Sec[retary] to the Chanc[ellor] of the Irish Exchequer; £400 a year. Stoddart is turned Doctor of Civil Law, and dwells in Doctors' Commons. I fear *his* commons are short, as they say. Did I send you an epitaph I scribbled

upon a poor girl [*Mary Druit, of Wimborne, a friend of Rickman's*] who died at nineteen? — a good girl, and a pretty girl, and a clever girl, but strangely neglected by all her friends and kin.

Under this cold marble stone  
Sleep the sad remains of one  
Who, when alive, by few or none  
Was loved, as loved she might have been,  
If she prosp'rous days had seen,  
Or had thriving been, I ween.  
Only this cold funeral stone  
Tells she was beloved by one,  
Who on the marble graves his moan.

Brief, and pretty, and tender, is 't not? I send you this, being the only piece of poetry I have *done*, since the muses all went with T[homas] M[anning] to Paris. I have neither stuff in my brain, nor paper in my draw[er], to write you a longer letter. Liquor and company and wicked tobacco o'nights, have quite dispericraniated me, as one may say; but you who spiritualise upon Champagne may continue to write long long letters, and stuff 'em with amusement to the end. Too long they cannot be, any more than a codicil to a will which leaves me sundry parks and manors not specified in the deed. But don't be *two months* before you write again. These from merry old England, on the day of her valiant patron St. George.

C. LAMB



CXXXV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

Saturday, May 27, 1803.

My dear Coleridge,—The date of my last was one day prior to the receipt of your letter, full of foul omens. I explain, lest you should have thought mine too light a reply to such sad matter. I seriously hope by this time you have given up all thoughts of journeying to the green islands of the Blest—(voyages in time of war are very precarious)—or at least, that you will take them in your way to the Azores. Pray be careful of this letter till it has done its duty, for it is to inform you that I have booked off your watch (laid in cotton like an untimely fruit), and with it *Condillac* and all other books of yours which were left here. These set out on Monday next, the 29th May, by Kendal waggon, from White Horse, Cripplegate. You will make seasonable inquiries, for a watch may n't come your way again in a hurry. I have been repeatedly after Tobin, and now hear that he is in the country, not to return till middle of June. I will take care and see him with the earliest. But cannot you write pathetically to *him*, enforcing a speedy mission of your books for literary purposes? He is too good a retainer to Literature, to let her interests suffer thro' his default. And why, in the name of Beelzebub, are your books to travel from Barnard's Inn to the Temple, and then circuitously to Cripplegate, when their business is to

take a short cut down Holborn Hill, up Snow ditto, on to Wood Street, &c.? The former mode seems a sad superstitious subdivision of labour. Well! *The Man of Ross* is to stand; Longman begs for it; the printer stands with a wet sheet in one hand and a useless Pica in the other, in tears pleading for it; I relent. Besides, it was a Salutation poem, and has the mark of the beast "Tobacco" upon it. Thus much I have done; I have swept off the lines about *widows* and *orphans* in second edition, which (if you remember) you most awkwardly and illogically caused to be inserted between two *Ifs*, to the great breach and disunion of said *Ifs*, which now meet again (as in first edition), like two clever lawyers arguing a case. Another reason for subtracting the pathos was, that *The Man of Ross* is too familiar to need telling what he did, and especially in worse lines than Pope told it; and it now stands simply as *Reflections at an Inn about a known Character*, and sucking an old story into an accommodation with present feelings. Here is no breaking spears with Pope, but a new, independent, and really a very pretty poem. In fact 't is as I used to admire it in the first volume and I have even dared to restore,—

If 'neath this roof thy *wine-chear'd* moments pass,  
for

Beneath this roof if thy chear'd moments pass.

"Chear'd" is a sad general word; "*wine-chear'd*"

I'm sure you'd give me, if I had a speaking-trumpet to sound to you 300 miles. But I am your *fac-totum*, and that (save in this instance, which is a single case, and I can't get at you) shall be next to a *fac-nihil*—at most, a *fac-simile*. I have ordered *Imitation of Spenc[s]er* to be restored on Wordsworth's authority; and now, all that you will miss will be *Flicker and Flicker's Wife*, *The Thimble*, *Breathe, dear harmonist*, and, I believe, *The Child that was fed with Manna*. Another vol[ume] will clear off all your Anthologic Morning-Postian Epistolary Miscellanies; but pray don't put *Christabel* therein; don't let that sweet maid come forth attended with Lady Holland's mob at her heels. Let there be a separate volume of Tales, Choice Tales, Ancient Mariners, &c. C. L.

A word of your health will be richly acceptable.

CXXXVI.—MARY LAMB TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

July 9, 1803.

My dear Miss Wordsworth,—We rejoice with exceeding great joy to hear the delightful tidings you were so *very* kind to remember to send us. I hope your dear sister is perfectly well, and makes an excellent nurse. Are you not now the happiest family in the world?

I have been in better health and spirits this week past than since my last illness. I continued so long so very weak and dejected I began to fear I should never be at all comfortable again. I strive against low spirits all I can, but it is a very hard thing to get the better of.

I am very uneasy about poor Coleridge, his last letters are very melancholy ones. Remember me affectionately to him and Sara. I hope you often see him.

Southey is in town. He seems as proud of his little girl as I suppose your brother is of his boy; he says his home is now quite a different place to what it used to be. I was glad to hear him say this — it used to look rather cheerless.

We went last week with Southey and Rickman and his sister to Sadlers Wells, the lowest and most London-like of all our London amusements — the entertainments were *Goody Two Shoes*, *Jack the Giant Killer*, and *Mary of Buttermere*! Poor Mary was very happily married at the end of the piece, to a sailor her former sweetheart. We had a prodigious fine view of her father's house in the vale of Buttermere — mountains very like large haycocks, and a lake like nothing at all. If you had been with us, would you have laughed the whole time like Charles and Miss Rickman or gone to sleep as Southey and Rickman did?

Stoddart is in expectation of going soon to Malta as Judge Advocate; it is likely to be a

profitable situation, fifteen hundred a year or more. If he goes he takes with him his sister, and, as I hear from her as a very great secret, a *wife* ; you must not mention this because if he stays in England he may not be rich enough to marry for some years. I do not know why I should trouble you with a secret which it seems I am unable to keep myself and which is of no importance to you to hear ; if he succeeds in this appointment he will be in a great bustle, for he must set out to Malta in a month. In the mean time he must go to Scotland to marry and fetch his wife, and it is a match against her parents' consent, and they as yet know nothing of the Malta expedition ; so that he expects many difficulties, but the young lady and he are determined to conquer them. He then must go to Salisbury to take leave of his father and mother, who I pity very much, for they are old people and therefore are not very likely ever to see their children again.

Charles is very well and very *good* — I mean very sober, but he is very good in every sense of the word, for he has been very kind and patient with me and I have been a sad trouble to him lately. He has shut out all his friends because he thought company hurt me, and done everything in his power to comfort and amuse me. We are to go out of town soon for a few weeks, when I hope I shall get quite stout and lively.

You saw Fenwick when you was with us —



perhaps you remember his wife and children were with his brother, a tradesman at Penzance. He (the brother), who was supposed to be in a great way of business, has become a bankrupt; they are now at Penzance without a home and without money; and poor Fenwick, who has been Editor of a country newspaper lately, is likely soon to be quite out of employ; I am distressed for them, for I have a great affection for Mrs. Fenwick.

How pleasant your little house and orchard must be now. I almost wish I had never seen it. I am always wishing to be with you. I could sit upon that little bench in idleness day long. When you have a leisure hour, a letter from [you], kind friend, will give me the greatest pleasure.

We have money of yours and I want you to send me some commission to lay it out. Are you not in want of anything? I believe when we go out of town it will be to Margate—I love the seaside and expect much benefit from it, but your mountain scenery has spoiled us. We shall find the flat country of the Isle of Thanet very dull.

Charles joins me in love to your brother and sister and the little John. I hope you are building more rooms. Charles said I was so long answering your letter Mrs. Wordsworth would have another little one before you received it. Our love and compliments to our kind Molly, I hope she grows younger and happier every day. When,

and where, shall I ever see you again? Not I fear for a very long time, you are too happy ever to wish to come to London. When you write tell me how poor Mrs. Clarkson does.

God bless you and yours.

I am your affectionate friend,

M. LAMB

#### CXXXVII.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

Saturday Morning, July 16, 1803.

Dear Rickman, — I enclose you a wonder, a letter from the shades. A dead body wants to return, and be enrolled *inter vivos*. 'T is a gentle ghost, and in this Galvanic age it may have a chance.

Mary and I are setting out for the Isle of Wight. We make but a short stay, and shall pass the time betwixt that place and Portsmouth, where Fenwick is. I sadly wanted to explore the Peak this Summer; but Mary is against steering without card or compass, and we should be at large in Darbyshire.

We shall be at home this night and to-morrow, if you can come and take a farewell pipe.

I regularly transmitted your Notices to the *Morning Post*, but they have not been duly honoured. The fault lay not in me.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

CXXXVIII. — TO JOHN RICKMAN

July 27, 1803.

[The earlier part of this letter is by Captain Burney, and is in his handwriting.]

Dear Rickman, — We are at Cowes the whole flock, Sheep and Lambs — and in good pasturage — for notwithstanding that I joined, or rather acquiesced, in your dispraise of Cowes, in a dry summer like this it is a very pleasant place. We were much harassed by hot travelling and uncertainties till we fixed at this haven ; and now I could feel myself thoroughly well disposed to indulge in a week of compleat idleness, if my senses were not invaded by the din of preparation, and the account which every day's paper brings of the universal bustle that prevails everywhere.

We purpose, however, to stay here one week longer reckoning from this date, and then to return to the defence of the Capital after so well having guarded the sea coast. We have visited Newport and Carisbrook Castle where we saw a deep well and a cross old woman. We went by water, and friend Lamb (to give a specimen of his seamanship) very ingeniously and unconsciously cast loose the fastenings of the mast, so that mast, sprit, sails, and all the rest tumbled overboard with a crash, and not less to his surprise than to the surprise of every other person in the boat. I doubt whether any of us will muster up sufficient

activity to go to the south part of the island. We do everything that is idle, such as reading books from a circulating library, sauntering, hunting little crabs among the rocks, reading churchyard poetry which is as bad at Cowes as any churchyard in the kingdom can produce. Miss Lamb is the only person among us who is not idle. All the cares she takes into her keeping. At night, however, we do a little business in the smoking line, and Martin endeavours to make conundrums, but alas! he is not equal to the achievement. Such is the edifying life we lead at the Isle of Wight. Let us know how you take care of the capital. An old sea saying is, "Give a sprat to catch a mackerel," so pray send us your mackerel and accept this sprat.

[*Lamb's part begins here.*]

I testify that this is a pretty good outline of our doings, but the filling it up requires the hand of a master. A volume might be made of Martin's blunders which parental tenderness omits. Such as his letting the packet-boat's boat go without him from the quay at Southampton, while he stood hiatusing, smit with the love of a Naiad; his tumbling back over a stone twice the height of himself, and daubing himself; his getting up to bathe at six o'clock, and forgetting it, and in consequence staying in his room in a process of annihilation, &c., &c., then the time expended in *Martin being scolded* would serve as great a sinner

as Judas to repent in. In short nothing in this house goes right till after supper, then a gentle circumambience of the weed serves to shut out Isle of Wight impertinent scenery and brings us back in fancy to Mutton Lane and the romantic alleys ever green of nether-Holborn, green that owes nothing to grass, but the simple effect of cabbage-water, tripe-cauls, &c. The fact of my setting the mast upsidedown is partly true. Indeed it was never properly nailed down, or the accident could not have happened.

Capt. Burney does nothing but teach his children bad habits. He surfeits them with cherries and black currants till they can eat no supper, and then claps down the fruit expended to the common stock, and deducts what the surfeit saves from his part. There's a little girl he's brought with him that has cost I don't know what in cod-lings. No ordinary orchard would be a jointure for her.

To add to our difficulties Martin has brought down a Terence, which he renders out loud into canine Latin at breakfast and other meals, till the eyes of the infatuated parent let slip water for joy, and the ears of everybody beside shed their wax for being tired. More I could add, but it is unsafe.

From the White Isle (date unknown).

C. L.



CXXXIX.—MARY LAMB TO SARAH  
STODDART

September 21, 1803.

My dear Sarah, — I returned home from my visit yesterday, and was much pleased to find your letter ; for I have been very anxious to hear how you are going on. I could hardly help expecting to see you when I came in ; yet, though I should have rejoiced to have seen your merry face again, I believe it was better as it was — upon the whole, and, all things considered, it is certainly better you should go to Malta. The terms you are upon with your Lover does (as you say it will) appear wondrous strange to me ; however, as I cannot enter into your feelings, I certainly can have nothing to say to it, only that I sincerely wish you happy in your own way, however odd that way may appear to me to be. I would begin now to advise you to drop all correspondence with William ; but, as I said before, as I cannot enter into your feelings and views of things, *your ways not being my ways*, why should I tell you what I would do in your situation ? So, child, take thy own ways, and God prosper thee in them !

One thing my advising spirit must say — use as little *Secrecy* as possible ; and, as much as possible, make a friend of your sister-in-law — you know I was not struck with her at first sight ; but, upon your account, I have watched and marked

her very attentively ; and, while she was eating a bit of cold mutton in our kitchen, we had a serious conversation. From the frankness of her manner, I am convinced she is a person I could make a friend of; why should not you? We talked freely about you : she seems to have a just notion of your character, and will be fond of you, if you will let her.

My father had a sister lived with us — of course, lived with my Mother, her sister-in-law ; they were, in their different ways, the best creatures in the world — but they set out wrong at first. They made each other miserable for full twenty years of their lives — my Mother was a perfect gentlewoman, my Aunt as unlike a gentlewoman as you can possibly imagine a good old woman to be ; so that my dear Mother (who, though you do not know it, is always in my poor head and heart) used to distress and weary her with incessant and unceasing attention and politeness, to gain her affection. The old woman could not return this in kind, and did not know what to make of it — thought it all deceit, and used to hate my Mother with a bitter hatred ; which, of course, was soon returned with interest. A little frankness, and looking into each other's characters at first, would have spared all this, and they would have lived, as they died, fond of each other for the last few years of their life. When we grew up, and harmonised them a little, they sincerely loved each other.

My Aunt and my Mother were wholly unlike you and your sister, yet in some degree theirs is the secret history I believe of all sisters-in-law — and you will smile when I tell you I think myself the only woman in the world who could live with a brother's wife, and make a real friend of her, partly from early observation of the unhappy example I have just given you, and partly from a knack I know I have of looking into people's real characters, and never expecting them to act out of it — never expecting another to do as I would in the same case. When you leave your Mother, and say, if you never shall see her again, you shall feel no remorse, and when you make a *jewish* bargain with your *Lover*, all this gives me no offence, because it is your nature, and your temper, and I do not expect or want you to be otherwise than you are. I love you for the good that is in you, and look for no change.

*But*, certainly, you ought to struggle with the evil that does most easily beset you—a total want of politeness in behaviour, I would say modesty of behaviour, but that I should not convey to you my idea of the word modesty ; for I certainly do not mean that you want *real modesty* ; and what is usually called false, or mock, modesty is [a quality] I certainly do not wish you to possess ; yet I trust you know what I mean well enough.

*Secrecy*, though you appear all frankness, is certainly a grand failing of yours ; it is likewise

your *brother's*, and, therefore, a family failing — by secrecy, I mean you both want the habit of telling each other at the moment everything that happens — where you go, — and what you do, — the free communication of letters and opinions just as they arrive, as Charles and I do, — and which is, after all, the only groundwork of friendship. Your brother, I will answer for [it,] will never tell his wife or his sister all that [is in] his mind — he will receive letters, and not [mention it]. This is a fault Mrs. Stoddart can never [tell him of] ; but she can, and will, feel it : though, [on] the whole, and in every other respect, she is [very] happy with him. Begin, for God's sake, at the first, and tell her everything that passes. At first she may hear you with indifference ; but in time this will gain her affection and confidence ; show her all your letters (no matter if she does not show hers) — it is a pleasant thing for a friend to put into one's hand a letter just fresh from the post. I would even say, begin with showing her this, but that it is written freely and loosely, and some apology ought to be made for it — which I know not how to make, for I must write freely or not at all.

If you do this, she will tell your brother, you will say ; and what then, quotha ? It will beget a freer communication amongst you, which is a thing devoutly to be wished —

God bless you, and grant you may preserve

your integrity, and remain unmarried and pen-  
niless, and make William a good and a happy  
wife.

Your affectionate friend,

M. LAMB

Charles is very unwell, and my head aches.  
He sends his love: mine, with my best wishes,  
to your brother and sister.

I hope I shall get another letter from you.

#### NOTE

[Sarah Stoddart was the sister of Dr. John Stoddart, who had just been appointed the King's and the Admiralty's Advocate at Malta, whither Miss Stoddart followed him. Her lover of that moment was a Mr. Turner, and William was an earlier lover still. Her sister-in-law was Mrs. John Stoddart, *née* Isabella Moncrieff, whom her brother had only just married.

"My Mother." This is the only reference to her mother in any of Mary Lamb's letters. The sister was Sarah Lamb, usually known as Aunt Hetty. — E. V. LUCAS.]

#### CXL.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

November 8, 1803.

My dear Sir, — I have been sitting down for three or four days successively to the review, which I so much wished to do well and to your satisfaction. But I can produce nothing but absolute flatness and nonsense. My health and spirits are so bad, and my nerves so irritable, that I am sure, if I persist, I shall tease myself into



a fever. You do not know how sore and weak a brain I have, or you would allow for many things in me which you set down for whims. I solemnly assure you that I never more wished to prove to you the value which I have for you than at this moment ; but although in so seemingly trifling a service I cannot get through with it, I pray you to impute it to this one sole cause, ill health. I hope I am above subterfuge, and that you will do me this justice to think so.

You will give me great satisfaction by sealing my pardon and oblivion in a line or two, before I come to see you, or I shall be ashamed to come.

Yours, with great truth,

C. LAMB

#### CXLI.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

November 10, 1803.

Dear Godwin,—You never made a more unlucky and perverse mistake than to suppose that the reason of my not writing that cursed thing was to be found in your book. I assure you most sincerely that I have been greatly delighted with Chaucer. I may be wrong, but I think there is one considerable error runs through it, which is a conjecturing spirit, a fondness for filling out the picture by supposing what Chaucer did and how he felt, where the materials are scanty. So far from meaning to withhold from you (out of mistaken tenderness) this opinion of mine, I

plainly told Mrs. Godwin that I did find a *fault*, which I should reserve naming until I should see you and talk it over. This she may very well remember, and also that I declined naming this fault until she drew it from me by asking me if there was not too much fancy in the work. I then confessed generally what I felt, but refused to go into particulars until I had seen you. I am never very fond of saying things before third persons, because in the relation (such is human nature) something is sure to be dropped.

If Mrs. Godwin has been the cause of your misconstruction, I am very angry, tell her; yet it is not an anger unto death. I remember also telling Mrs. G. (which she may have *dropt*) that I was by turns considerably more delighted than I expected. But I wished to reserve all this until I saw you. I even had conceived an expression to meet you with, which was thanking you for some of the most exquisite pieces of criticism I had ever read in my life. In particular, I should have brought forward that on *Troilus and Cressida* and Shakespear which, it is little to say, delighted me, and instructed me (if not absolutely *instructed* me, yet put into *full-grown sense* many conceptions which had arisen in me before in my most discriminating moods). All these things I was preparing to say, and bottling them up till I came, thinking to please my friend and host, the author! when lo! this deadly blight intervened.

I certainly ought to make great allowances for

your misunderstanding me. You, by long habits of composition and a greater command gained over your own powers, cannot conceive of the desultory and uncertain way in which I (an author by fits) sometimes cannot put the thoughts of a common letter into sane prose. Any work which I take upon myself as an engagement will act upon me to torment, *e. g.*, when I have undertaken, as three or four times I have, a school-boy copy of verses for Merchant Taylors' boys, at a guinea a copy, I have fretted over them, in perfect inability to do them, and have made my sister wretched with my wretchedness for a week together. The same, till by habit I have acquired a mechanical command, I have felt in making paragraphs.

As to reviewing, in particular, my head is so whimsical a head, that I cannot, after reading another man's book, let it have been never so pleasing, give any account of it in any methodical way. I cannot follow his train. Something like this you must have perceived of me in conversation. Ten thousand times I have confessed to you, talking of my talents, my utter inability to remember in any comprehensive way what I read. I can vehemently applaud, or perversely stickle, at *parts*; but I cannot grasp at a whole. This infirmity (which is nothing to brag of) may be seen in my two little compositions, the tale and my play, in both which no reader, however partial, can find any story. I wrote such stuff

about Chaucer, and got into such digressions, quite irreducible into  $1\frac{1}{5}$  column of a paper, that I was perfectly ashamed to show it you. However, it is become a serious matter that I should convince you I neither slunk from the task through a wilful deserting neglect, or through any (most imaginary on your part) distaste of Chaucer; and I will try my hand again, I hope with better luck.

My health is bad and my time taken up, but all I can spare between this and Sunday shall be employed for you, since you desire it; and if I bring you a crude, wretched paper on Sunday, you must burn it, and forgive me; if it proves anything better than I predict, may it be a peace-offering of sweet incense between us.

C. LAMB

## CXLII.—TO THOMAS POOLE

February 14, 1804.

Dear Sir, — I am sorry we have not been able to hear of lodgings to suit young F., but we will not desist in the inquiry. In a day or two something may turn up. Boarding houses are common enough, but to find a family where he would be safe from impositions within and impositions without is not so easy.

I take this opportunity of thanking you for your kind attentions to the lad I took the liberty of recommending. *His* mother was disposed to

have taken in young F., but could not possibly make room.

Your obliged, &c.,

C. LAMB

CXLIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

March 10, 1804.

Dr C., —I blunder'd open this letter, its weight making me conjecture it held an inclosure; but finding it poetry (which is no man's ground, but waste and common) I perused it. Do you remember that you are to come to us to-night?

C. L.

NOTE

[This is written on the back of a paper addressed to Mr. Lamb, India House, containing a long extract from *Madoc* in Southey's hand.]

CXLIV.—MARY LAMB TO SARAH STODDART

[March, 1804.]

My dearest Sarah, —I will just write a few hasty lines to say Coleridge is setting off sooner than we expected; and I every moment expect him to call in one of his great hurrys for this. Charles intended to write by him, but has not: most likely he will send a letter after him to Portsmouth: if he does, you will certainly hear from him soon. We rejoiced with exceed-



ing joy to hear of your safe arrival : I hope your brother will return home in a few years a very rich man. Seventy pounds in one fortnight is a pretty beginning —

I envy your brother the pleasure of seeing Coleridge drop in unexpectedly upon him ; we talk — but it is but wild and idle talk — of following him : he is to get my brother some little snug place of a thousand a year, and we are to leave all, and come and live among ye. What a pretty dream !

Coleridge is very ill. I dread the thoughts of his long voyage — write as soon as he arrives, whether he does or not, and tell me how he is.

Jamaica bodies . . . [*words illegible*].

He has got letters of recommendation to Governor Ball, and God knows who ; and he will talk and talk, and be universally admired. But I wish to write for him a *letter of recommendation* to Mrs. Stoddart, and to yourself, to take upon ye, on his first arrival, to be kind affectionate nurses ; and mind, now, that you perform this duty faithfully, and write me a good account of yourself. Behave to him as you would to me, or to Charles, if we came sick and unhappy to you.

I have no news to send you ; Coleridge will tell you how we are going on. Charles has lost the newspaper ; but what we dreaded as an evil has proved a great blessing, for we have both strangely recovered our health and spirits since

this has happened ; and I hope, when I write next, I shall be able to tell you Charles has begun something which will produce a little money ; for it is not well to be *very poor* — which we certainly are at this present writing.

I sit writing here, and thinking almost you will see it to-morrow ; and what a long, long time it will be ere you receive this — When I saw your letter, I fancy'd you were even just then in the first bustle of a new reception, every moment seeing new faces, and staring at new objects, when, at that time, everything had become familiar to you ; and the strangers, your new dancing partners, had perhaps become gossiping fireside friends. You tell me of your gay, splendid doings ; tell me, likewise, what manner of home-life you lead — Is a quiet evening in a Maltese drawing room as pleasant as those we have passed in Mitre Court and Bell yard ? — Tell me all about it, everything pleasant, and everything unpleasant, that befalls you.

I want you to say a great deal about yourself. *Are you happy ? and do you not repent going out ?* I wish I could see you for one hour only.

Remember me affectionately to your sister and brother ; and tell me, when you write, if Mrs. Stoddart likes Malta, and how the climate agrees with her and with thee.

We heard you were taken prisoners, and for several days believed the tale.

How did the pearls, and the fine court finery,

bear the fatigues of the voyage, and how often have they been worn and admired?

Rickman wants to know if you are going to be married yet — satisfy him in that little particular when you write.

The Fenwicks send their love, and Mrs. Reynolds her love, and the little old lady her best respects.

Mrs. Jefferies, who I see now and then, talks of you with tears in her eyes, and, when she heard you was taken prisoner, Lord! how frightened she was. She has heard, she tells me, that Mr. Stoddart is to have a pension of two thousand a year, whenever he chuses to return to England.

God bless you, and send you all manner of comforts and happinesses.

Your most affectionate friend,

MARY LAMB

How-do? how-do? Notime to write. S. T. C.  
going off in a great hurry.

CH. LAMB

#### CXLV.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

Tuesday, March 13, 1804.

Dear Robert, — I received your notes safe, and thank you for them. It seems you are about to be married. Joy to you and uninterrupted satisfaction in that state. But who is the lady? it is the character of your letters, that you omit facts,

dates, names and matter, and describe nothing but feelings; in which as I cannot always partake, as being more intense in degree or different in kind from my own tranquil ones, I cannot always well tell how to reply. Your dishes are too much sauced and spiced and flavored, for me to suppose that you can relish my plain meats and vulgar aliment. Still, Robert, if I cannot always send you of the same, they have a smack and a novelty, a Robert-ism about them, that make them a dainty stimulus to my palate at times.

I have little to tell you of. You are mistaken; I am disengaged from all newspaper connexions, and breathe a freer air in consequence. I was bound like Gulliver in a multitude of little chains; which, by quotidian teasing, swelled to a rack and a gibbet in the year's account. I am poorer but happier. Your three pounds came seasonably, but I doubt whether I am fairly entitled to them as a debt.

I am obliged to break off here, and would not send this unfinished, but that you might otherwise be uneasy about the moneys.

Am I ever to see you? For it is like letters to the dead, or for a friend to write to his friend in the Fortunate Isles, or the moon, or at the Antipodes, to address a line to *one* in Warwickshire that I am never to see in London. I shall lose the very face of Robert by disuse, and I question, if I were a painter, if I could now paint it from memory.

I could tell you many things; but you are so spiritual and abstracted that I fear to insult you with tidings of this world. But may your approaching husbandhood humanize you. I think I see a dawn. I am sure joy is rising upon you, and I stand a tiptoe to see the sun ascending, till it gets up and up, and, "while a man tells the story," shews at last a fair face and a full light.

God bless you, Robert.

C. L.

CXLVI.— TO S. T. COLERIDGE

April 4, 1804.

My dear C., — I but just received your commission-abounding letter. All shall be done. Make your European heart easy in Malta, all shall be performed. You say I am to transcribe off part of your letters and send to X somebody (but the name is lost under the wafer, so you must give it me) — I suppose Wordsworth.

I have been out of town since Saturday, the reason I had not your letter before. N. B. N. B. Knowing I had two or three Easter holydays, it was my intention to have ask'd you if my accompanying you to Portsmouth would have been pleasant. But you were not visible, except just at the critical moment of going off from the inn, at which time I could not get at you. So *Deus aliter disposuit*, and I went down into Hertfordshire.



I write in great bustle indeed — God bless you again. Attend to what I have written mark'd X above, and don't merge any part of your orders under seal again.

C. LAMB

The £1 came safe.

Mary would send her best love, but I write at office.

CXLVII.—TO THOMAS POOLE

Temple, May 4, 1804.

Dear Sir, — I have no sort of connexion with the *Morning Post* at present, nor acquaintance with its late editor (the present editor of the *Courier*) to ask a favour of him with propriety; but if it will be of any use, I believe I could get the insertions into the *British Press* (a morning paper) through a friend.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

CXLVIII.—TO THOMAS POOLE

Temple, May 5, 1804.

Dear Sir, — I can get the insertions into the *British Press* without any difficulty at all. I am only sorry that I have no interest in the *Morning Post*, having so much greater circulation. If your friend chuses it, you will be so good as to return me the critique, of which I forgot to take a copy,

and I suppose on Monday or Tuesday it will be in. The sooner I have it, the better.

Yours, &c.,

C. LAMB

I did formerly assist in the *Post*, but have no longer any engagement.

CXLIX.—TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

June 2, 1804.

Dear Miss Wordsworth, — The task of letter-writing in my family falls to me; you are the organ of correspondence in yours, so I address you rather than your brother. We are all sensibly obliged to you for the little scraps (*Arthur's Bower* and his brethren) which you sent up; the book-seller has got them and paid Mrs. Fenwick for them. So while some are authors for fame, some for money, you have commenced author for charity. The least we can do is to see your commissions fulfilled; accordingly I have booked this 2d June, 1804, from the Waggon Inn in Cripple-gate the watch and books which I got from your brother Richard, together with Purchas's *Pilgrimage* and Brown's *Religio Medici*, which I desire your brother's acceptance of, with some *pens*, of which I observed no great frequency when I tarried at Grasmere. (I suppose you have got Coleridge's letter.) These things I have put up in a deal box directed to Mr. Wordsworth, Grasmere,

near Ambleside, Kendal, by the Kendal waggon. At the same time I have sent off a parcel by C.'s desire to Mr. T. Hutchinson to the care of Mr. "T. Monkhouse, or T. Markhouse" (for C.'s writing is not very plain), Penrith, by the Penrith waggon this day; which I beg you to apprise them of, lest my direction fail. In your box you will find a little parcel for Mrs. Coleridge, which she wants as soon as possible; also for yourselves the cotton, magnesia, bark and oil, which come to £2. 3. 4., thus, —

	s.
Thread and needles	17
Magnesia	8
Bark	9 . 8
Oil	8 . 8
	<hr/>
	2 . 3 . 4
Packing case	2 . 6
	<hr/>
	2 . 5 . 10
Deduct a guinea I owe you, which C. was to pay, but did not,	<hr/> 1 . 1 . —
	<hr/>
Leaves you indebted	1 . 4 . 10

whereby you may see how punctual I am.

I conclude with our kindest remembrances to your brother and Mrs. W.

We hear the young John is a giant.

And should you see Charles Lloyd, pray *forget*  
to give my love to him.

Yours truly, Dear Miss W.,

C. LAMB

I send you two little copies of verses by Mary  
L—b, —

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A MOTHER AND CHILD

*Child* “O Lady, lay your costly robes aside,  
*sings.* No longer may you glory in your pride.”

*Mother.* Wherefore to-day art singing in mine ear  
Sad songs were made so long ago, my dear?  
This day I am to be a bride, you know.  
Why sing sad songs were made so long ago?

*Child.* “O Mother, lay your costly robes aside,”  
*For you may never be another’s bride:*  
*That line* I learnt not in the old sad song.

*Mother.* I pray thee, pretty one, now hold thy tongue;  
Play with the bridemaids, and be glad, my boy,  
For thou shalt be a second father’s joy.

*Child.* One father fondled me upon his knee:  
One father is enough alone for me.

Suggested by a print of two females after Leo-  
[nardo da] Vinci, called Prudence and Beauty,  
which hangs up in our ro[om].

Oh that you could see the print!!

The Lady Blanch, regardless of all her lovers’ fears,  
To the Ursuline Convent hastens, and long the abbess hears:  
“O Blanch, my child, repent thee of the courtly life ye lead.”  
Blanch looked on a rosebud, and little seem’d to heed;  
She looked on the rosebud, she looked round, and thought  
On all her heart had whisper’d, and all the nun had taught:

" I am worshipped by lovers, and brightly shines my fame,  
All Christendom resoundeth the noble Blanch's name ;  
Nor shall I quickly wither like the rosebud from the tree,  
My queen-like graces shining when my beauty's gone from  
me.

But when the sculptur'd marble is raised o'er my head,  
And the matchless Blanch lies lifeless among the noble dead,  
This saintly lady abbess has made me justly fear,  
It nothing will avail me that I were worshipt here."

I wish they may please you ; we in these parts  
are not a little proud of them.

C. L.

CL. — MARY LAMB TO SARAH STODDART

Late July, 1804.

My dearest Sarah, — Your letter, which contained the news of Coleridge's arrival, was a most welcome one ; for we had begun to entertain very unpleasant apprehensions for his safety ; and your kind reception of the forlorn wanderer gave me the greatest pleasure, and I thank you for it in my own and my brother's name. I shall depend upon you for hearing of his welfare ; for he does not write himself ; but, as long as we know he is safe and in such kind friends' hands, we do not mind. Your letters, my dear Sarah, are to me very, very precious ones. They are the kindest, best, most natural ones I ever received. The one containing the news of the arrival of Coleridge perhaps the best I ever saw ; and your old friend Charles is of my opinion. We sent it off to Mrs.



Coleridge and the Wordsworths; as well because we thought it our duty to give them the first notice we had of our dear friend's safety, as that we were proud of shewing our Sarah's pretty letter.

The letters we received a few days after from you and your brother were far less welcome ones. I rejoiced to hear your sister is well; but I grieved for the loss of the dear baby; and I am sorry to find your brother is not so successful as he at first expected to be; and yet I am almost tempted to wish his ill fortune may send him over [to] us again. He has a friend, I understand, who is now at the head of the Admiralty; why may he not return, and make a fortune here?

I cannot condole with you very sincerely upon your little failure in the fortune-making way. If you regret it, so do I. But I hope to see you a comfortable English wife; and the forsaken, forgotten William, of English-partridge memory, I have still a hankering after. However, I thank you for your frank communication, and I beg you will continue it in future; and if I do not agree with a good grace to your having a Maltese husband, I will wish you happy, provided you make it a part of your marriage articles that your husband shall allow you to come over sea and make me one visit; else may neglect and overlookedness be your portion while you stay there.

I would condole with you when the misfortune has fallen your poor leg; but such is the blessed distance we are at from each other that I

hope, before you receive this, that you forgot it ever happened.

Our compliments [to] the high *ton* at the Maltese court. Your brother is so profuse of them to me, that being, as you know, so unused to them, they perplex me sadly ; in future, I beg they may be discontinued. They always remind me of the free, and, I believe, very improper, letter I wrote to you while you were at the Isle of Wight. The more kindly you and your brother and sister took the impertinent advice contained in it, the more certain I feel that it was unnecessary, and therefore highly improper. Do not let your brother compliment me into the memory of it again.

My brother has had a letter from your mother which has distressed him sadly — about the postage of some letters being paid by my brother. Your silly brother, it seems, has informed your mother (I did not think your brother could have been so silly) that Charles had grumbled at paying the said postage. The fact was, just at that time we were very poor, having lost the *Morning Post*, and we were beginning to practise a strict economy. My brother, who never makes up his mind whether he will be a miser or a spendthrift, is at all times a strange mixture of both : of this failing, the even economy of your correct brother's temper makes him an ill judge. The miserly part of Charles, at that time smarting under his recent loss, then happened to reign triumphant ; and he would not write, or let me

write, so often as he wished, because the postage cost two and fourpence. Then came two or three of your poor mother's letters nearly together; and the two and fourpences he wished, but grudging, to pay for his own, he was forced to pay for hers. In this dismal distress he applied to Fenwick to get his friend Motley to send them free from Portsmouth. This Mr. Fenwick could have done for half a word's speaking; but this he did not do! Then Charles foolishly and unthinkingly complained to your brother in a half-serious, half-joking way; and your brother has wickedly, and with malice aforethought, told your mother. O fie upon him! what will your mother think of us?

I, too, feel my share of blame in this vexatious business; for I saw the unlucky paragraph in my brother's letter; and I had a kind of foreboding that it would come to your mother's ears; although I had a higher opinion of your brother's good sense than I find he deserved. By entreaties and prayers I might have prevailed on my brother to say nothing about it. But I make a point of conscience never to interfere or cross my brother in the humour he happens to be in. It always appears to me to be a vexatious kind of tyranny, that women have no business to exercise over men, which, merely because *they having a better judgment*, they have the power to do. Let *men* alone, and at last we find they come round to the right way, which *we*, by a kind of intuition, perceive

at once. But better, far better, that we should let them often do wrong, than that they should have the torment of a monitor always at their elbows.

Charles is sadly fretted now, I know, at what to say to your mother. I have made this long preamble about it to induce [you], if possible, to reinstate us in your mother's good graces. Say to her it was a jest misunderstood ; tell her Charles Lamb is not the shabby fellow she and her son took him for ; but that he is now and then a trifle whimsical or so. I do not ask your brother to do this, for I am offended with him for the mischief he has made.

I feel that I have too lightly passed over the interesting account you sent me of your late disappointment. It was not because I did not feel and completely enter into the affair with you. You surprise and please me with the frank and generous way in which you deal with your lovers, taking a refusal from their so prudential hearts with a better grace and more good humour than other women accept a suitor's service. Continue this open artless conduct, and I trust you will at last find some man who has sense enough to know you are well worth risking a peaceable life of poverty for. I shall yet live to see you a poor but happy English wife.

Remember me most affectionately to Coleridge ; and I thank you again and again for all your kindness to him. To dear Mrs. Stoddart and your brother I beg my best love ; and to you

all I wish health and happiness and a *soon* return to Old England.

I have sent to Mr. Burrel's for your kind present ; but unfortunately he is not in town. I am impatient to see my fine silk handkerchiefs ; and I thank you for them, not as a present, for I do not love presents, but as a remembrance of your old friend. Farewell.

I am, my best Sarah,

Your most affectionate friend,

MARY LAMB

Good wishes, and all proper remembrances, from old nurse, Mrs. Jeffries, Mrs. Reynolds, Mrs. Rickman, &c. &c. &c.

Long live Queen Hoop-oop-oop-oo, and all the old merry phantoms !

[*Charles Lamb adds :*]

My dear Miss Stoddart, — Mary has written so fully to you that I have nothing to add but that, in all the kindness she has exprest and loving desire to see you again, I bear my full part. You will perhaps like to tear this half from the sheet, and give your brother only his strict due, the remainder. So I will just repay your late kind letter with this short postscript to hers. Come over here, and let us all be merry again.

C. LAMB



CLI.—TO ROBERT LLOYD<sup>1</sup>

September 13, 1804.

Dear Robert, — I was startled in a very pleasant manner by the contents of your letter. It was like your good self to take so handsome an opportunity of renewing an old friendship. I thank you kindly for your offers to bring me acquainted with Mrs. Ll. I cannot come now, but assuredly I will some time or other, to see how this new relation sits upon you. I am naturally shy of new faces; but the lady who has chosen my old friend Robert cannot have a repelling one. Assure her of my sincere congratulations and friendly feelings. Mary joins in both with me, and considers herself as only left out of your kind invitation by some *lapsus styli*. We have already had all the holydays we can have this year. We have been spending our usual summer month at Richmond, from which place we traced the banks of the old Thames for ten and twenty miles, in daily walks or rides, and found beauties which may compare with Ulswater and Windermere. We visited Windsor, Hampton, etc. etc. — but this is a deviation from the subject with which I began my letter.

Some day I certainly shall come and see you in your new light; no longer the restless (but good) Robert; but now the staid, sober (and not

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter appears, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.

less good) married Robert. And how does Plumstead, the impetuous, take your getting the start of him? When will he subside into matrimony? Priscilla has taken a long time indeed to think about it. I will suppose that her first choice is now her final; though you do not expressly say that she is to be a Wordsworth. I wish her, and dare promise her, all happiness.

All these new nuptials do not make me unquiet in the perpetual prospect of celibacy. There is a quiet dignity in old-bachelorhood, a leisure from cares, noise, etc., an enthronisation upon the armed-chair of a man's feeling that he may sit, walk, read, unmolested, to none accountable—but hush! or I shall be torn in pieces like a churlish Orpheus by young married women and bridesmaids of Birmingham. The close is this, to every man that way of life which is his election is best. Be as happy in yours as I am determined to be in mine, and we shall strive lovingly who shall sing best the praises of matrimony, and the praises of singleness.

Adieu, my old friend in a new character, and believe me that no “wounds” have pierced our friendship; only a long want of seeing each other has disfurnished us of topics on which to talk. Is not your new fortunes a topic which may hold us for some months (the honey months at least)?

C. LAMB

CLII.—MARY LAMB TO MRS. S. T.  
COLERIDGE

October 13, 1804.

My dear Mrs. Coleridge, — I have had a letter written ready to send to you, which I kept, hoping to get a frank, and now I find I must write one entirely anew, for that consisted of matter not now in season, such as condolence on the illness of your children, who I hope are now quite well, and comfortings on your uncertainty of the safety of Coleridge, with wise reasons for the delay of the letters from Malta, which must now be changed for pleasant congratulations. Coleridge has not written to us, but we have had two letters from the Stoddarts since the one I sent to you, containing good accounts of him; but as I find you have had letters from himself I need not tell you the particulars.

My brother sent your letters to Mr. Motley according to Coleridge's direction, and I have no doubt but he forwarded them.

One thing only in my poor letter the time makes no alteration in, which is that I have half a bed ready for you, and I shall rejoice with exceeding great joy to have you with me. Pray do not change your mind, for I shall be sadly disappointed if you do. Will Hartley be with you? I hope he will, for you say he goes with you to Liverpool, and I conclude you come from thence to London.

I have seen your brother lately, and I find he entertains good hopes from Mr. Salte, and his present employment, I hear, is likely to continue a considerable time longer, so that I hope you may consider him as good as provided for. He seems very steady, and is very well spoken of at his office.

I have lately been often talking of you with Mrs. Hazlitt. William Hazlitt is painting my brother's picture, which has brought us acquainted with the whole family. I like William Hazlitt and his sister very much indeed, and I think Mrs. Hazlitt a pretty good-humoured woman. She has a nice little girl of the Pypos kind, who is so fond of my brother that she stops strangers in the street to tell them when *Mr. Lamb is coming to see her*.

I hope Mr. Southey and your sister and the little Edith are well. I beg my love to them.

God bless you, and your three little darlings, and their wandering father, who, I hope, will soon return to you in high health and spirits.

I remain ever your affectionate friend,

MARY LAMB

Compliments to Mr. Jackson and darling friend. I hope they are well.

[*Charles Lamb adds the following paragraph to this letter, written by his sister Mary:*]

C. Lamb particularly desires to be remem-

bered to Southey and all the Southeys, as well as to Mrs. C. and her little Coleridges. Mrs. C.'s letters have all been sent as Coleridge left word, to Motley's, Portsmouth.

#### NOTE

[Hazlitt's portrait of Lamb was the one in the dress of a Venetian senator, reproduced in Vol. I of this edition. It now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.]

### CLIII.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

November 7, 1804.

Dear Southey,— You were the last person from whom we heard of Dyer, and if you know where to forward the news I now send to him, I shall be obliged to you to lose no time. D.'s sister-in-law, who lives in St. Dunstan's Court, wrote to him about three weeks ago, to the Hope Inn, Cambridge, to inform him that Squire Houlbert, or some such name, of Denmark Hill, has died, and left her husband a thousand pounds, and two or three hundred to Dyer. Her letter got no answer, and she does not know where to direct to him; so she came to me, who am equally in the dark. Her story is, that Dyer's immediately coming to town now, and signing some papers, will save him a considerable sum of money—how, I don't understand; but it is very right he should hear of this. She has left me barely time for the post; so I conclude with all love, &c., to all at Keswick.



Dyer's brother, who, by his wife's account, has got 1000*l.* left him, is father of the little dirty girl, Dyer's niece and factotum.

In haste,

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

If you send George this, cut off the last paragraph.

D.'s laundress had a letter a few days since ; but George never dates.

#### CLIV. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

February 18, 1805.

My dear Wordsworth, — The subject of your letter has never been out of our thoughts since the day we first heard of it, and many have been our impulses towards you, to write to you or to write to inquire about you ; but it never seemed the time. We felt all your situation, and how much you would want Coleridge at such a time, and we wanted somehow to make up to you his absence, for we loved and honoured your brother, and his death always occurs to my mind with something like a feeling of reproach, as if we ought to have been nearer acquainted, and as if there had been some incivility shown him by us, or something short of that respect which we now feel ; but this is always a feeling when people die, and I should not foolishly offer a piece of refinement, instead

of sympathy, if I knew any other way of making you feel how little like indifferent his loss has been to us.

I have been for some time wretchedly ill and low, and your letter this morning has affected me so with a pain in my inside and a confusion, that I hardly know what to write or how. I have this morning seen Stewart, the second mate, who was saved; but he can give me no satisfactory account, having been in quite another part of the ship when your brother went down. But I shall see Gilpin to-morrow, and will communicate your thanks, and learn from him all I can. All accounts agree that just before the vessel going down, your brother seemed like one overwhelmed with the situation, and careless of his own safety. Perhaps he might have saved himself; but a captain who in such circumstances does all he can for his ship and nothing for himself is the noblest idea. I can hardly express myself, I am so really ill. But the universal sentiment is, that your brother did all that duty required: and if he had been more alive to the feelings of those distant ones whom he loved, he would have been at that time a less admirable object; less to be exulted in by them: for his character is high with all that I have heard speak of him, and no reproach can fix upon him. To-morrow I shall see Gilpin, I hope, if I can get at him, for there is expected a complete investigation of the causes of the loss of the ship, at the East India House, and all the officers are

to attend: but I could not put off writing to you a moment. It is most likely I shall have something to add to-morrow in a second letter. If I do not write, you may suppose I have not seen G., but you shall hear from me in a day or two.

We have done nothing but think of you, particularly of Dorothy. Mary is crying by me while I with difficulty write this; but as long as we remember anything, we shall remember your brother's noble person, and his sensible manly modest voice, and how safe and comfortable we all were together in our apartment, where I am now writing. When he returned, having been one of the triumphant China fleet, we thought of his pleasant exultation (which he exprest here one night) in the wish that he might meet a Frenchman in the seas; and it seem'd to be accomplished, all to his heart's desire. I will conclude from utter inability to write any more, for I am seriously unwell; and because I mean to gather something like intelligence to send to you to-morrow: for, as yet, I have but heard second hand, and seen one narrative, which is but a transcript of what was common to all the papers. God bless you all, and reckon upon us as entering into all your griefs.

[*Signature cut away.*]

NOTE

[This is the first of a series of letters bearing upon the loss of the East Indiaman *Earl of Abergavenny*, which was wrecked off Portland Bill on February 6, 1805, two hundred persons

and the captain, John Wordsworth, being lost. The character of Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior* is said to have been largely drawn from his brother John. His age was only thirty-three. — E. V. LUCAS.]

## CLV. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

February 19, 1805.

My dear Wordsworth, — I yesterday wrote you a very unsatisfactory letter. To-day I have not much to add, but it may be some satisfaction to you that I have seen Gilpin, and thanked him in all your names for the assistance he tried to give; and that he has assured me that your brother did try to save himself, and was doing so when Gilpin called to him, but he was then struggling with the waves and almost dead. G. heard him give orders a very little before the vessel went down, with all possible calmness, and it does not at all appear that your brother in any absence of mind neglected his own safety. But in such circumstances the memory of those who escaped cannot be supposed to be very accurate; and there appears to be about the persons that I have seen a good deal of reservedness and unwillingness to enter into detail, which is natural, they being officers of the ship, and liable to be examined at home about its loss. The examination is expected to-day or to-morrow, and if anything should come out that can interest you, I shall take an early opportunity of sending it to you.

Mary wrote some few days since to Miss Stod-

dart, containing an account of your brother's death, which most likely Coleridge will have heard, before the letter comes : we both wish it may hasten him back. We do not know anything of him, whether he is settled in any post (as there was some talk) or not. We had another sad account to send him, of the death of his school-fellow Allen ; tho' this, I am sure, will much less affect him. I don't know whether you knew Allen ; he died lately very suddenly in an apoplexy. When you do and can write, particularly inform us of the healths of you all. God bless you all. Mary will write to Dorothy as soon as she thinks she will be able to bear it. It has been a sad tidings to us, and has affected us more than we could have believed. I think it has contributed to make me worse, who have been very unwell, and have got leave for some few days to stay at home ; but I am ashamed to speak of myself, only in excuse for the unfeeling sort of huddle which I now send. I could not delay it, having seen Gilpin, and I thought his assurance might be some little ease to you.

We will talk about the books when you can better bear it. I have bought none yet. But do not spare me any office you can put me on, now or when you are at leisure for such things. Adopt me as one of your family in this affliction ; and use me without ceremony as such.

Mary's kindest love to all.

C. L.



## CLVI.—TO THOMAS MANNING

February 23, 1805.

Dear Manning,—We have executed your commissions. There was nothing for you at the White Horse. I have been very unwell since I saw you: a sad depression of spirits, a most unaccountable nervousness; from which I have been partially relieved by an odd accident. You knew Dick Hopkins, the swearing scullion of Caius? This fellow, by industry and agility, has thrust himself into the important situations (no sinecures, believe me) of cook to Trinity Hall and Caius College; and the generous creature has contrived, with the greatest delicacy imaginable, to send me a present of Cambridge brawn. What makes it the more extraordinary is, that the man never saw me in his life that I know of. I suppose he has *heard* of me. I did not immediately recognise the donor; but one of Richard's cards, which had accidentally fallen into the straw, detected him in a moment. Dick, you know, was always remarkable for flourishing. His card imports, that "orders (to wit, for brawn) from any part of England, Scotland, or Ireland, will be duly executed," &c.

At first, I thought of declining the present; but Richard knew my blind side when he pitched upon brawn. 'Tis of all my hobbies the supreme in the eating way. He might have sent sops from the pan, skimmings, crumplets, chips, hog's lard, the tender brown judiciously scalped from a fillet

of veal (dexterously replaced by a salamander), the tops of asparagus, fugitive livers, runaway gizzards of fowls, the eyes of martyred pigs, tender effusions of laxative woodcocks, the red spawn of lobsters, leverets' ears, and such pretty filchings common to cooks; but these had been ordinary presents, the everyday courtesies of dishwashers to their sweethearts. Brawn was a noble thought. It is not every common gullet-fancier [that] can properly esteem it. It is like a picture of one of the choice old Italian masters. Its gusto is of that hidden sort.

As Wordsworth sings of a modest poet, — “you must love him, ere to you he will seem worthy of your love;” so brawn, you must taste it, ere to you it will seem to have any taste at all. But 't is nuts to the adept: those that will send out their tongues and feelers to find it out. It will be wooed, and not unsought be won. Now, ham-essence, lobsters, turtle, such popular minions, absolutely *court you*, lay themselves out to strike you at first smack, like one of David's pictures (they call him *Darveed*), compared with the plain russet-coated wealth of a Titian or a Correggio, as I illustrated above. Such are the obvious glaring heathen virtues of a corporation dinner, compared with the reserved collegiate worth of brawn.

Do me the favour to leave off the business which you may be at present upon, and go immediately to the kitchens of Trinity and Caius,

and make my most respectful compliments to Mr. Richard Hopkins, and assure him that his brawn is most excellent; and that I am moreover obliged to him for his innuendo about salt water and bran, which I shall not fail to improve. I leave it to you whether you shall choose to pay him the civility of asking him to dinner while you stay in Cambridge, or in whatever other way you may best like to show your gratitude to *my friend*. Richard Hopkins, considered in many points of view, is a very extraordinary character. Adieu: I hope to see you to supper in London soon, where we will taste Richard's brawn, and drink his health in a cheerful but moderate cup. We have not many such men in any rank of life as Mr. R. Hopkins. Crisp the barber, of St. Mary's, was just such another. I wonder *he* never sent me any little token, some chestnuts, or a puff, or two pound of hair: just to remember him by. Gifts are like nails. *Praesens ut absens*, that is, your *present* makes amends for your absence.

Yours,

C. LAMB

#### NOTE

[This letter is, I take it, a joke: that is to say, the brawn was sent to Lamb by Manning, who seems to have returned to Cambridge for a while, and Lamb affects to believe that Hopkins, from whom it was bought, was the giver. I think this view is supported by the reference to Mr. Crisp, at the end, — Mr. Crisp being Manning's late landlord.

The letter contains Lamb's second expression of epicurean rapture: the first in praise of pig. — E. V. LUCAS.]

## CLVII. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

March 5, 1805.

My dear Wordsworth, — If Gilpin's statement has afforded you any satisfaction, I can assure you that he was most explicit in giving it, and even seemed anxious (interrupting me) to do away any misconception. His statement is not contradicted by the last and fullest of the two narratives which have been published (the former being a mere transcript of the newspapers), which I would send you if I did not suppose that you would receive more pain from the unfeeling, canting way in which it is drawn up, than satisfaction from its contents; and what relates to your brother in particular is very short. It states that your brother was seen talking to the first mate but a few minutes before the ship sank, with apparent cheerfulness, and it contradicts the newspaper account about his depression of spirits procrastinating his taking leave of the Court of Directors; which the drawer-up of the narrative (a man high in the India House) is likely to be well informed of. It confirms Gilpin's account of his seeing your brother striving to save himself, and adds that "Webber, a joiner, was near the captain, who was standing on the hencoop when the ship went down, whom he saw washed off by a sea, which also carried him (Webber) overboard;" — this is all which concerns your brother personally. But I will just

transcribe from it a copy of Gilpin's account delivered in to the Court of Directors: —

“Memorandum respecting the loss of the *E. of A.*”

“At ten A. M., being about ten leagues to the westward of Portland, the commodore made the signal to bear up — did so accordingly; at this time having maintopgallantmast struck, fore and mizzen ditto on deck, and the jib-boom in the wind about west-southwest. At three P. M. got on board a pilot, being about two leagues to the westward of Portland; ranged and bitted both cables at about half-past three, called all hands and got out the jib-boom at about four. While crossing the east end of the Shambles, the wind suddenly died away, and a strong tide setting the ship to the westward, drifted her into the breakers, and a sea striking her on the larboard quarter, brought her to, with her head to the northward, when she instantly struck, it being about five P. M. Let out all the reefs, and hoisted the topsails up, in hopes to shoot the ship across the Shambles. About this time the wind shifted to the north-west. The surf driving us off, and the tide setting us on alternately, sometimes having four and one half at others nine fathoms, sand of the sea about eight feet; continued in this situation till about half-past seven, when she got off. During the time she was on the Shambles, had from three to four feet water; kept the water at this height about fifteen minutes, during the whole time the



pumps constantly going. Finding she gained on us, it was determined to run her on the nearest shore. About eight the wind shifted to the eastward: the leak continuing to gain upon the pumps, having ten or eleven feet water, found it expedient to bale at the foreshuttles and hatchway. The ship would not bear up — kept the helm hard a starboard, she being water-logg'd; but still had a hope she could be kept up till we got her on Weymouth Sands. Cut the lashings of the boats; could not get the long-boat out, without laying the maintopsail aback, by which our progress would have been so delayed that no hope would have been left us of running her aground, and there being several sloops in sight, one having sent a small skiff on board, took away two ladies and three other passengers, and put them on board the sloop, at the same time promising to return and take away a hundred or more of the people; she finding much difficulty in getting back to the sloop, did not return. About this time the third mate and purser were sent in the cutter to get assistance from the other ships. Continued pumping and baling till eleven P. M. when she sunk. Last cast of the lead eleven fathoms; having fired guns from the time she struck till she went down, about two A. M. boats came and took the people from the wreck about seventy in number. The troops, in particular the dragoons, pumped very well.

(Signed)

“THO<sup>S</sup>. GILPIN”

And now, my dear W., I must apologize for having named my health. But indeed it was because, what with the ill news, your letter coming upon me in a most wretched state of ill spirits, I was scarce able to give it an answer, and I felt what it required. But we will say no more about it. I am getting better; and, when I have persisted time enough in a course of regular living, I shall be well. But I am now well enough, and have got to business afresh.

Mary thanks you for your invitation. I have wished myself with you daily since the news. I have wished that I were Coleridge, to give you any consolation. You have not mourned without one to have a feeling of it. And we have not undervalued the intimation of your friendship. We shall one day prove it by intruding on your privacy, when these griefs shall be a little calmed. This year, I am afraid, it is impossible: but I shall store it up as among the good things to come, which keep us up when life and spirits are sinking.

If you have not seen, or wish to see, the wretched narrative I have mentioned, I will send it. But there is nothing more in it affecting you. I have hesitated to send it, because it is unfeelingly done, and in the hope of sending you something from some of the actual spectators; but I have been disappointed, and can add nothing yet. Whatever I pick up, I will store for you. It is perfectly understood at the East India House, that

no blame whatever belongs to the captain or officers.

I can add no more but Mary's warmest love to all. When you can write without trouble, do it, for you are among the very chief of our interests.

C. LAMB

CLVIII.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

March 21, 1805.

Dear Wordsworth,— Upon the receipt of your last letter, before that which I have just received, I wrote myself to Gilpin putting your questions to him; but have yet had no answer. I at the same time got a person in the India House to write a much fuller inquiry to a relative of his who was saved, one Yates a midshipman. Both these officers (and indeed pretty nearly all that are left) have got appointed to other ships and have joined them. Gilpin is in the *Comet*, Indiaman, now lying at Gravesend. Neither Yates nor Gilpin have yet answered, but I am in daily expectation. I have sent your letter of this morning also to Gilpin. The waiting for these answers has been my reason for not writing you. I have made very particular inquiries about Webber, but in vain. He was a common seaman (not the ship's carpenter) and no traces of him are at the India House: it is most probable that he has entered in some privateer, as most of the crew have done.

I will keep the £1 note till you find out something I can do with it. I now write idly, having nothing to send ; but I cannot bear that you should think I have quite neglected your commission. My letter to G. was such as I thought he could not but answer ; but he may be busy. The letter to Yates, I hope I can promise, will be answered. One thing, namely, why the other ships sent no assistance, I have learn'd from a person on board one of them : the firing was never once heard, owing to the very stormy night, and no tidings came to them till next morning. The sea was quite high enough to have thrown out the most expert swimmer, and might not your brother have received some blow in the shock, which disabled him ?

We are glad to hear poor Dorothy is a little better. None of you are able to bear such a stroke. To people oppressed with feeling, the loss of a good-humoured happy man that has been friendly with them, if he were no brother, is bad enough. But you must cultivate his spirits, as a legacy, and believe that such as he cannot be lost. He was a chearful soul ! God bless you. Mary's love always.

C. LAMB

CLIX. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

April 5, 1805.

Dear Wordsworth, — I have this moment received this letter from Gilpin in reply to three or

four short questions I put to him in my letter before yours for him came. He does not notice having received yours, which I sent immediately. Perhaps he has already answered it to you. You see that his hand is sprain'd, and your questions being more in number may delay his answer to you. My first question was, when it was he called to your brother: the rest you will understand from the answers. I was beginning to have hard thoughts of G. from his delay, but now I am confirm'd in my first opinion that he is a rare good-hearted fellow. How is Dorothy and all of you?

Yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

Fourth question was, — Was Capt. W. standing near the shrouds or any place of safety at the moment of sinking?

*Comet,*

Northfleet, March 31, 1805.

Sir, — I did not receive yours of 16th inst. till this day, or should have answered it sooner. To your first question I answer, After the ship had sunk. To your second, my answer is, I was in the starboard mizzen rigging — I thought I see the captain hanging by a rope that was fast to the mizzen mast. I came down and hailed him as loud as I could; he was about ten feet distant from me. I threw a rope, which fell close to him; he seem'd quite motionless and insensible (it was excessive cold), and was soon after sweep'd away, and I see him no more. It was near about five minutes after the ship went down. With respect to the captain and Webber being on the same hencoop, I can give no answer; all I can say, I did not see them. Your fourth question I cannot answer, as I did not see Captain Wordsworth at the moment the ship



was going down, tho' I was then on the poop less than one minute before I see the captain there. The statement in the printed pamphlet is by no means correct. I have sprained my wrist most violently, and am now in great pain, which will, I hope, be an apology for the shortness of this letter.

Believe me truly yours,\*

THO<sup>S</sup>. GILPIN

This letter has been detained till April 5th.

\* This is merely a kind way of expressing himself, for I have no acquaintance with him, nor ever saw him but that once I got introduced to him.

I think I did not mention in my last that I sent yours to T. Evans, Richmond. I hope you have got an answer.

#### NOTE

[In a letter from Dorothy Wordsworth to Mrs. Clarkson, dated April 19, 1805, we read,—

I have great pleasure in thinking that you may see Miss Lamb; do not miss it if you can possibly go without injury to yourself — they are the best good creatures — blessings be with them! they have sympathised in our sorrow as tenderly as if they had grown up in the same [town?] with us and known our beloved John from his childhood. Charles has written to us the most consolatory letters, the result of diligent and painful inquiry of the survivors of the wreck, — for this we must love him as long as we have breath. I think of him and his sister every day of my life, and many times in the day with thankfulness and blessings. Talk to dear Miss Lamb about coming into this country and let us hear what she says of it. I cannot express how much we all wish to see her and her brother while we are at Grasmere. We look forward to Coleridge's return with fear and painful hope — but indeed I dare not look to it — I think as little as I can of him.]

CLX. — TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

[*Slightly torn. The conjectures in brackets are Tal-  
fourd's*]

June 14, 1805.

My dear Miss Wordsworth, — Your long kind letter has not been thrown away (for it has given me great pleasure to find you are all resuming your old occupations, and are better), but poor Mary, to whom it is addrest, cannot yet relish it. She has been attacked by one of her severe illnesses, and is at present *from home*. Last Monday week was the day she left me ; and I hope I may calculate upon having her again in a month or little more. I am rather afraid late hours have in this case contributed to her indisposition. But when she begins to discover symptoms of approaching illness, it is not easy to say what is best to do. Being by ourselves is bad, and going out is bad. I get so irritable and wretched with fear that I constantly hasten on the disorder. You cannot conceive the misery of such a foresight. I am sure that for the week before she left me, I was little better than light-headed. I now am calm, but sadly taken down, and flat. I have every reason to suppose that this illness, like all her former ones, will be but temporary ; but I cannot always feel so. Meantime she is dead to me, and I miss a prop. All my strength is gone, and I am like a [fool, ber]left of her co-operation. I dare not think, lest I [should think] wrong ; so used am

I to look up to her [in the least] and the biggest perplexity. To say *all that* [I know of her] would be more than I think anybody could [believe or even under]stand; and when I hope to have her well [again with me] it would be sinning against her feelings to go about to praise her: for I can conceal nothing that I do from her. She is older and wiser and better than I, and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself by resolutely thinking on her goodness. She would share life and death, heaven and hell, with me. She lives but for me. And I know I have been wasting and teasing her life for five years past incessantly with my cursed drinking and ways of going on. But even in this upbraiding of myself I am offending against her, for I know that she has cleaved to me for better, for worse; and if the balance has been against her hitherto, it was a noble trade.

I am stupid and lose myself in what I write. I write rather what answers to my feelings (which are sometimes sharp enough) than expresses my present ones, for I am only flat and stupid.

Poor Miss Stoddart! she is coming to England under the notion of passing her time between her mother and Mary, between London and Salisbury. Since she talk'd of coming, word has been sent to Malta that her mother is gone out of her mind. This letter, with mine to Stoddart with an account of Allen's death, &c., has miscarried (taken by the French) [*word missing*]. She is

coming home, with no soul to receive [*words missing*]. She has not a woman friend in London.

I am sure you will excuse my writing [any more: I] am very poorly. I cannot resist tra[n-scribing] three or four lines which poor Mary made upon a picture (a Holy Family) which we saw at an auction only one week before she left home. She was then beginning to show signs of ill-boding. They are sweet lines, and upon a sweet picture. But I send them, only as the last memorial of her.

VIRGIN AND CHILD. — L. DA VINCI

Maternal Lady with the virgin grace,  
Heaven-born thy Jesus seemeth sure,  
And thou a virgin pure.  
Lady most perfect, when thy angel face  
Men look upon, they wish to be  
Catholics, Madonna fair, to worship thee.

You had her lines about the *Lady Blanch*. You have not had some which she wrote upon a copy of a girl from Titian, which I had hung up where that print of Blanch and the abbess (as she beautifully interpreted two female figures from L. da Vinci) had hung in our room. 'T is light and pretty.

Who art thou, fair one, who usurp'st the place  
Of Blanch, the lady of the matchless grace?  
Come, fair and pretty, tell to me  
Who in thy lifetime thou mightst be?  
Thou pretty art and fair,  
But with the Lady Blanch thou never must compare.

No need for Blanch her history to tell,  
Whoever saw her face, they there did read it well.  
But when I look on thee, I only know  
There liv'd a pretty maid some hundred years ago.

This is a little unfair, to tell so much about ourselves, and to advert so little to your letter, so full of comfortable tidings of you all. But my own cares press pretty close upon me, and you can make allowance. That you may go on gathering strength and peace is the next wish to Mary's recovery.

I had almost forgot your repeated invitation. Supposing that Mary will be well and able, there is another *ability* which you may guess at, which I cannot promise myself. In prudence we ought not to come. This illness will make it still more prudential to wait. It is not a balance of this way of spending our money against another way, but an absolute question of whether we shall stop now, or go on wasting away the little we have got beforehand, which my wise conduct has already incroach'd upon one half. My best love, however, to you all ; and to that most friendly creature, Mrs. Clarkson, and better health to her, when you see or write to her. C. LAMB

#### CLXI. — TO THOMAS MANNING

Dated by Mr. Hazlitt : July 27, 1805.

Dear Archimedes, — Things have gone on badly with thy ungeometrical friend ; but they



are on the turn. My old housekeeper has shewed signs of convalescence, and will shortly resume the power of the keys, so I shan't be cheated of my tea and liquors. Wind in the west, which promotes tranquillity. Have leisure now to anticipate seeing thee again. Have been taking leave of tobacco in a rhyming address. Had thought *that vein* had been long since closed up. But the Lord opened Sara's bag after years of unproduction. Find I can rhyme and reason too. Think of studying mathematics, to restrain the fire of my genius, which George Dyer recommends. Have frequent bleedings at the nose, which shows plethoric. Maybe shall try the sea myself, that great scene of wonders. Got incredibly sober and regular; shave oftener, and hum a tune, to signify cheerfulness and gallantry.

Suddenly disposed to sleep, having taken a quart of pease with bacon and stout. Will not refuse Nature, who has done such things for me!

Nurse! don't call me unless Mr. Manning comes. — What! the gentleman in spectacles? —  
Yes. *Dormit.* C. L.

Saturday,  
Hot Noon.

## CLXII. — TO WILLIAM AND DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

September 28, 1805.

My dear Wordsworth (or Dorothy rather, for to you appertains the biggest part of this answer

by right), — I will not again deserve reproach by so long a silence. I have kept deluding myself with the idea that Mary would write to you, but she is so lazy, or, I believe the true state of the case, so diffident, that it must revert to me as usual. Though she writes a pretty good style, and has some notion of the force of words, she is not always so certain of the true orthography of them, and that and a poor handwriting (in this age of female calligraphy) often deter her where no other reason does.

We have neither of us been very well for some weeks past. I am very nervous, and she most so at those times when I am : so that a merry friend, adverting to the noble consolation we were able to afford each other, denominated us not unaptly Gum-Boil and Tooth-Ache: for they use to say that a gum-boil is a great relief to a tooth-ache. We have been two tiny excursions this summer, for three or four days each : to a place near Harrow, and to Egham, where Cooper's Hill is; and that is the total history of our rustications this year. Alas! how poor a sound to Skiddaw, and Helvellyn, and Borrodaile, and the magnificent sesquipedalia of the year 1802. Poor old Molly! to have lost her pride, that "last infirmity of noble minds," and her cow. — Providence need not have set her wits to such an old Molly. I am heartily sorry for her. Remember us lovingly to her. And in particular remember us to Mrs. Clarkson in the most kind manner.

I hope by southwards you mean that she will be at or near London, for she is a great favorite of both of us, and we feel for her health as much as is possible for any one to do. She is one of the friendliest, comfortablest women we know, and made our little stay at your cottage one of the pleasantest times we ever past. We were quite strangers to her. Mr. C. is with you too? — our kindest separate remembrances to him.

As to our special affairs, I am looking about me. I have done nothing since the beginning of last year, when I lost my newspaper job, and having had a long idleness, I must do something or we shall get very poor. Sometimes I think of a farce; but hitherto all schemes have gone off, — an idle brag or two of an evening vapor-ing out of a pipe, and going off in the morning; but now I have bid farewell to my “sweet enemy” Tobacco, as you will see in my next page, I perhaps shall set soberly to work. Hang Work! I wish that all the year were holyday. I am sure that indolence, indefeasible indolence, is the true state of man, and business the invention of the Old Teaser who persuaded Adam’s Master to give him an apron and set him a-hoe-ing. Pen and ink, and clerks and desks, were the refinements of this old torturer a thousand years after, under pretence of commerce allying distant shores, promoting and diffusing knowledge, good, &c.

## A FAREWELL TO TOBACCO

May the Babylonish curse  
Straight confound my stammering verse,  
If I can a passage see  
In this word-perplexity,  
Or a fit expression find,  
Or a language to my mind  
(Still the phrase is wide an acre),  
To take leave of thee, Tobacco;  
Or in any terms relate  
Half my love, or half my hate,  
For I hate yet love thee so,  
That, whichever thing I shew,  
The plain truth will seem to be  
A constrain'd hyperbole,  
And the passion to proceed  
More from a mistress than a weed.

Sooty retainer to the vine,  
Bacchus' black servant, negro fine,  
Sorcerer that mak'st us doat upon  
Thy begrim'd complexion,  
And, for thy pernicious sake,  
More and greater oaths to break  
Than reclaimed lovers take  
'Gainst women. Thou thy siege dost lay  
Much too in the female way,  
While thou suck'st the labouring breath  
Faster than kisses, or than Death.

Thou in such a cloud dost bind us,  
That our worst foes cannot find us,  
And Ill Fortune (that would thwart us)  
Shoots at rovers, shooting at us;  
While each man, thro' thy heightening steam,  
Does like a smoking Etna seem,  
And all about us does express  
(Fancy and Wit in richest dress)  
A Sicilian fruitfulness.

Thou through such a mist dost shew us,  
That our best friends do not know us;  
And, for those allowed features,  
Due to reasonable creatures,  
Liken'st us to fell Chimeras,  
Monsters that who see us fear us,  
Worse than Cerberus or Geryon,  
Or, who first loved a cloud, Ixion.

Bacchus we know, and we allow  
His tipsy rites. But what art thou?  
That but by reflex canst shew  
What his deity can do,  
As the false Egyptian spell  
Aped the true Hebrew miracle,  
Some few vapours thou may'st raise,  
The weak brain may serve to amaze,  
But to the reins and nobler heart  
Canst nor life nor heat impart.

Brother of Bacchus, later born,  
The old world was sure forlorn,  
Wanting thee; that aidest more  
The God's victories than before  
All his panthers, and the brawls  
Of his piping Bacchanals;  
These, as stale, we disallow,  
Or judge of *thee* meant: only thou  
His true Indian conquest art;  
And, for ivy round his dart,  
The reformed God now weaves  
A finer thyrsus of thy leaves.

Scent to match thy rich perfume  
Chymic art did ne'er presume  
Through her quaint alembic strain;  
None so sovran to the brain.  
Nature, that did in thee excel,  
Framed again no second smell.



Roses, violets, but toys  
For the smaller sort of boys,  
Or for greener damsels meant ;  
Thou 'rt the only manly scent.

Stinking'st of the stinking kind,  
Filth of the mouth and fog of the mind,  
Africa that brags her foyson,  
Breeds no such prodigious poison,  
Henbane, nightshade, both together,  
Hemlock, aconite —

Nay rather,  
Plant divine, of rarest virtue,  
Blisters on the tongue would hurt you ;  
'T was but in a sort I blamed thee,  
None e'er prosper'd who defamed thee :  
Irony all, and feign'd abuse,  
Such as perplex lovers use  
At a need, when in despair  
To paint forth their fairest fair,  
Or in part but to express  
That exceeding comeliness  
Which their fancies does so strike,  
They borrow language of dislike,  
And instead of dearest miss,  
Honey, jewel, sweetheart, bliss ;  
And, those forms of old admiring,  
Call her cockatrice and syren,  
Basilisk and all that 's evil,  
Witch, hyena, mermaid, devil,  
Ethiop wench, and blackamoor,  
Monkey, ape, and twenty more,  
Friendly traitress, loving foe :  
Not that she is truly so,  
But no other way they know  
A contentment to express,  
Borders so upon excess,  
That they do not rightly wot,  
Whether it be pain or not.

Or, as men, constrain'd to part  
With what's nearest to their heart,  
While their sorrow's at the height,  
Lose discrimination quite,  
And their hasty wrath let fall,  
To appease their frantic gall,  
On the darling thing whatever,  
Whence they feel it death to sever,  
Though it be, as they, perforce,  
Guiltless of the sad divorce.

For I must (nor let it grieve thee,  
Friendliest of plants, that I must) leave thee —  
For thy sake, Tobacco, I  
Would do anything but die ;  
And but seek to extend my days  
Long enough to sing thy praise.  
But, as she, who once has been  
A king's consort, is a queen  
Ever after ; nor will bate  
Any tittle of her state,  
Though a widow, or divorced,  
So I, from thy converse forced,  
The old name and style retain  
(A right Katherine of Spain) ;  
And a seat, too, 'mongst the joys  
Of the blest tobacco boys :  
Where, though I by sour physician  
Am debarr'd the full fruition  
Of thy favours, I may catch  
Some collateral sweets, and snatch  
Sidelong odours, that give life  
Like glances from a neighbour's wife  
And still dwell in the by-places,  
And the suburbs of thy graces,  
And in thy borders take delight,  
An unconquer'd Canaanite.

I wish you may think this a handsome fare-

well to my "Friendly Traitor." Tobacco has been my evening comfort and my morning curse for these five years; and you know how difficult it is from refraining to pick one's lips even, when it has become a habit. This poem is the only one which I have finished since so long as when I wrote *Hester Savory*. I have had it in my head to do it these two years, but Tobacco stood in its own light when it gave me headaches that prevented my singing its praises. Now you have got it, you have got all my store, for I have absolutely not another line. No more has Mary. We have nobody about us that cares for poetry, and who will rear grapes when he shall be the sole eater? Perhaps if you encourage us to shew you what we may write, we may do something now and then before we absolutely forget the quantity of an English line for want of practice. The *Tobacco*, being a little in the way of Withers (whom Southey so much likes), perhaps you will somehow convey it to him with my kind remembrances. Then everybody will have seen it that I wish to see it: I have sent it to Malta.

I remain, dear W. and D., yours truly,

C. LAMB

#### NOTE

[The *Farewell to Tobacco* was printed in the *Reflector*, No. IV, 1811 or 1812, and then in the *Works*, 1818. Lamb's farewell was frequently repeated; but it is a question whether he ever entirely left off smoking. [See letter of Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart, June 2, 1806.] Talfourd says that he did; but the late Mrs. Coe, who remembered Lamb at Widford

about 1827-1830, credited him with the company of a black clay pipe. It was Lamb who, when Dr. Parr asked him how he managed to emit so much smoke, replied that he had toiled after it as other men after virtue. And Macready relates that he remarked in his presence that he wished to draw his last breath through a pipe and exhale it in a pun. — E. V. LUCAS.]

[We read this interesting extract in a letter from Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart, early in November, 1805 : ]

If I possibly can, I will prevail upon Charles to write to your brother by the conveyance you mention ; but he is so unwell, I almost fear the fortnight will slip away before I can get him in the right vein. Indeed, it has been sad and heavy times with us lately : when I am pretty well, his low spirits throws me back again ; and when he begins to get a little chearful, then I do the same kind office for him. I heartily wish for the arrival of Coleridge ; a few such evenings as we have sometimes passed with him would wind us up, and set us a-going again.

Do not say anything, when you write, of our low spirits — it will vex Charles. You would laugh, or you would cry, perhaps both, to see us sit together, looking at each other with long and rueful faces, and saying, “ how do you do ? ” and “ how do you do ? ” and then we fall a-crying, and say we will be better on the morrow. He says we are like tooth-ache and his friend gum bile — which, though a kind of ease, is but an uneasy kind of ease, a comfort of rather an uncomfortable sort.

### CLXIII. — TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

November 10, 1805.

Dear Hazlitt, — I was very glad to hear from you, and that your journey was so *picturesque*. We miss you, as we foretold we should. One or two things have happened, which are beneath the dignity of epistolary communication, but which, seated about our fire at night (the winter hands

of pork have begun), gesture and emphasis might have talked into some importance. Something about Rickman's wife, for instance: how tall she is and that she visits prank'd out like a Queen of the May with green streamers — a good-natured woman, though, which is as much as you can expect from a friend's wife whom you got acquainted with a bachelor. Some things too about Monkey, which can't so well be written — how it set up for a fine lady, and thought it had got lovers, and was obliged to be convinc'd of its age from the parish register, where it was proved to be only twelve; and an edict issued that it should not give itself airs yet these four years; and how it got leave to be called Miss, by grace; — these and such like hows were in my head to tell you, but who can write? Also how Manning's come to town in spectacles, and studies physic; is melancholy, and seems to have something in his head, which he don't impart. Then, how I am going to leave off smoking.

O la! your Leonardos of Oxford made my mouth water. I was hurried thro' the gallery, and they escaped me. What do I say? I was a Goth then, and should not have noticed them. I had not settled my notions of beauty. I have now forever! — the small head, the [*here is drawn a long narrow eye*] long eye, — that sort of peer-ing curve, the wicked Italian mischief! the stick-at-nothing, Herodias'-daughter kind of grace. You understand me. But you disappoint me in



passing over in absolute silence the Blenheim Leonardo. Didn't you see it? Excuse a lover's curiosity. I have seen no pictures of note since, except Mr. Dawe's gallery.

It is curious to see how differently two great men treat the same subject, yet both excellent in their way; for instance, Milton and Mr. Dawe. Mr. Dawe has chosen to illustrate the story of Samson exactly in the point of view in which Milton has been most happy: the interview between the Jewish hero, blind and captive, and Dalilah. Milton has imagined his locks grown again, strong as horsehair or porcupine's bristles; doubtless shaggy and black, as being hairs "which, of a nation armed, contained the strength." I don't remember he *says* black: but could Milton imagine them to be yellow? Do you? Mr. Dawe with striking originality of conception has crowned him with a thin yellow wig, in colour precisely like Dyson's; in curl and quantity resembling Mrs. Professor's; his limbs rather stout, — about such a man as my brother or Rickman, — but no Atlas nor Hercules, nor yet so bony as Dubois, the clown of Sadler's Wells. This was judicious, taking the spirit of the story rather than the fact; for doubtless God could communicate national salvation to the trust of flax and tow as well as hemp and cordage, and could draw down a temple with a golden tress as soon as with all the cables of the British navy.

Miss Dawe is about a portrait of sulky Fanny

Imlay, *alias* Godwin : but Miss Dawe is of opinion that her subject is neither reserved nor sullen, and doubtless she will persuade the picture to be of the same opinion. However, the features are tolerably like. — Too much of Dawes !

Was n't you sorry for Lord Nelson ? I have followed him in fancy ever since I saw him walking in Pall Mall (I was prejudiced against him before), looking just as a hero should look ; and I have been very much cut about it indeed. He was the only pretence of a great man we had. Nobody is left of any name at all. His secretary died by his side. I imagined him, a Mr. Scott, to be the man you met at Hume's ; but I learn from Mrs. Hume that it is not the same. I met Mrs. H. one day, and agreed to go on the Sunday to tea, but the rain prevented us, and the distance. I have been to apologise, and we are to dine there the first fine Sunday. Strange perverseness ! I never went while you staid here, and now I *go to find you* ! What other news is there, Mary ? — What puns have I made in the last fortnight ? You never remember them. You have no relish for the comic. “ Oh ! tell Hazlitt not to forget to send the *American Farmer*. I daresay it is n't so good as he fancies ; but a book 's a book.”

I have not heard from Wordsworth or from Malta since. Charles Kemble, it seems, enters into possession to-morrow. We sup at 109 Russell Street this evening. I wish your brother would n't drink. It's a blemish in the greatest

characters. You send me a modern quotation poetical. How do you like this in an old play? Vittoria Corombona, a spunky Italian lady, a Leonardo one, nicknamed the White Devil, being on her trial for murder, &c. — and questioned about seducing a duke from his wife and the State, makes answer, —

Condemn you me for that the Duke did love me?  
So may you blame some fair and crystal river,  
For that some melancholic distracted man  
Hath drown'd himself in it.

Our ticket was a £20. Alas!! are both yours blanks?

P. S. Godwin has asked after you several times.

N. B. I shall expect a line from you, if but a bare line, whenever you write to Russell Street, and a letter often when you do not. I pay no postage; but I will have consideration for you until Parliament time and franks. Luck to Ned Search and the new art of colouring. Monkey sends her love, and Mary especially.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

#### NOTE

[This is the first letter from Lamb to Hazlitt that has been preserved. The two men first met at Godwin's. Holcroft and Coleridge were disputing which was best — man as he is, or man as he ought to be. Lamb broke in with, "Give me man as he ought *not* to be." — E. V. LUCAS.]

#### CLXIV.—TO THOMAS MANNING

November 15, 1805.

Dear Manning, — Certainly you could not have called at all hours from two till ten, for we have been only out of an evening Monday and Tuesday in this week. But if you think you have, your thought shall go for the deed. We did pray for you on Wednesday night. Oysters unusually luscious — pearls of extraordinary magnitude found in them. I have made bracelets of them — given them in clusters to ladies. Last night we went out in despite, because you were not come at your hour.

This night we shall be at home, so shall we certainly both Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Take your choice, mind I don't say of one, but chuse which evening you will not, and come the other four. Doors open at five o'clock. Shells forced about nine. Every gentleman smokes or not as he pleases. O ! I forgot, bring the £10, for fear you should lose it.

C. L.

#### CLXV.—TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

January 15, 1806.

Dear Hazlitt, — Godwin went to Johnson's yesterday about your business. Johnson would not come down or give any answer, but has promised to open the manuscript and to give you an

answer in one month. Godwin will punctually go again (Wednesday is Johnson's open day) yesterday four weeks next; *i. e.*, in one lunar month from this time. Till when Johnson positively declines giving any answer. I wish you joy on ending your search. Mrs. H. was naming something about a Life of Fawcett, to be by you undertaken: the great Fawcett, as she explain'd to Manning, when he ask'd, *What Fawcett?* He innocently thought *Fawcett the player*. But Fawcett the divine is known to many people, albeit unknown to the Chinese inquirer. I should think, if you liked it, and Johnson declined it, that Phillips is the man. He is perpetually bringing out biographies, Richardson, Wilkes, Foot, Lee Lewis, without number: little trim things in two easy volumes, price 12s. the two, made up of letters to and from, scraps, posthumous trifles, anecdotes, and about forty pages of hard biography. You might dish up a Fawcettiad in three months, and ask sixty or eighty pounds for it. I should dare say that Phillips would catch at it. I wrote to you the other day in a great hurry. Did you get it? This is merely a letter of business at Godwin's request.

Lord Nelson is quiet at last. His ghost only keeps a slight fluttering in odes and elegies in newspapers, and impromptus, which could not be got ready before the funeral.

As for news, — we have Miss Stoddart in our house; she has been with us a fortnight and will



stay a week or so longer. She is one of the few people who are not in the way when they are with you. No tidings of Coleridge. Fenwick is coming to town on Monday (if no kind angel intervene) to surrender himself to prison. He hopes to get the Rules of the Fleet. On the same, or nearly the same, day, Fell, my other quondam co-friend and drinker, will go to Newgate, and his wife and four children, I suppose, to the parish. Plenty of reflection and motives of gratitude to the wise Disposer of all things in *us*, whose prudent conduct has hitherto ensured us a warm fire and snug roof over our heads. *Nullum numen abest si sit Prudentia.*

Alas! Prudentia is in the last quarter of her tutelary shining over me. A little time and I — But maybe I may, at last, hit upon some mode of collecting some of the vast superfluities of this money-voiding town. Much is to be got, and I don't want much. All I ask is time and leisure; and I am cruelly off for them.

When you have the inclination, I shall be very glad to have a letter from you. Your brother and Mrs. H., I am afraid, think hardly of us for not coming oftener to see them, but we are distracted beyond what they can conceive with visitors and visitings. I never have an hour for my head to work quietly its own workings; which you know is as necessary to the human system as sleep.

Sleep, too, I can't get for these damn'd winds

of a night: and without sleep and rest what should ensue? Lunacy. But I trust it won't.

Yours, dear H., mad or sober,

C. LAMB

CLXVI. — TO JOHN RICKMAN

January 25, 1806.

Dear Rickman, — You do not happen to have any place at your disposal which would suit a decayed Literatus? I do not much expect that you have, or that you will go much out of the way to serve the object, when you hear it is Fenwick. But the case is, by a *mistaking* of his *turn*, as they call it, he is reduced, I am afraid, to extremities, and would be extremely glad of a place in an office. Now it does sometimes happen that just as a man wants a place, a place wants him; and though this is a lottery to which none but G. Burnett would choose to trust his all, there is no harm just to call in at Despair's office for a friend, and see if *his* number is come up (Burnett's further case I enclose by way of episode).

Now, if you should happen, or anybody you know, to want a *hand*, here is a young man of solid but not brilliant genius, who would turn his hand to the making out dockets, penning a manifesto, or scoring a tally, not the worse (I hope) for knowing Latin and Greek, and having in youth conversed with the philosophers. But from these follies I believe he is thoroughly awak-

ened, and would bind himself by a terrible oath never to imagine himself an extraordinary genius again.

Yours, &c.,

C. LAMB

CLXVII.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

February 1, 1806.

Dear Wordsworth,—I have seen the books which you ordered, booked at the White Horse Inn, Cripplegate, by the Kendal waggon this day, 1st Feb. 1806; you will not fail to see after them in time. They are directed to you at Grasmere. We have made some alteration in the editions since your sister's directions. The handsome quarto Spenser which she authorized Mary to buy for £2. 12. 6, when she brought it home in triumph proved to be *only the Faerie Queene*: so we got them to take it again and I have procured instead a folio, which luckily contains, besides all the poems, the view of the state of Ireland, which is difficult to meet with. The Spenser and the Chaucer, being noble old books, we did not think Stockdale's modern volumes would look so well beside them; added to which I don't know whether you are aware that the print is *excessive small*, same as *Elegiac Extracts*, or smaller, not calculated for eyes in age; and Shakespeare is one of the last books one should like to give up, perhaps the one just before the dying service in a large prayer-

book. So we have used our own discretion in purchasing Pope's fine quarto in six volumes, which may be read *ad ultimam horam vitae*. It is bound like law books (rather, half bound) and the law robe I have ever thought as comely and gentlemanly a garb as a book would wish to wear. The state of the purchase then stands thus, —

Urry's Chaucer	£	1	16	0
Pope's Shakespeare		2	2	0
Spenser			14	0
Milton		1	5	0
Packing case, &c.			3	6
			<hr/>	
			6	0 6

which your brother immediately repaid us. He has the bills for all (by his desire) except the Spenser, which we took no bill with (not looking to have our accounts audited): so for that and the case he took a separate receipt for 17*s.* 6*d.*

N. B. There is writing in the Shakespeare: but it is only *variae lectiones*, which some careful gentleman, the former owner, was at the pains to insert in a very neat hand from five commentators. It is no defacement. The fault of Pope's edition is, that he has comically and coxcombically marked the beauties: which is vile, as if you were to chalk up the cheek and across the nose of a handsome woman in red chalk to shew where the comeliest parts lay. But I hope the noble type and library appearance of the books

will atone for that. With the books come certain books and pamphlets of G. Dyer, presents or rather decoy-ducks of the poet to take in his thus-far obliged friends to buy his other works; as he takes care to inform them in MS. notes to the title-pages, "G. Dyer, author of other books printed for Longman, &c." The books have lain at your dispatchful brother's a twelvemonth, to the great staling of most of the subjects.

The three letters and what is else written at the beginning of the respective *presents* will ascertain the division of the property. If not, none of the donees, I dare say, will grudge a community of property in this case. We were constrained to pack 'em how we could, for room. Also there comes W. Hazlitt's book about Human Action, for Coleridge; a little song book for Sarah Coleridge; a box for Hartley which your brother was to have sent, but now devolved on us: I don't know from whom it came, but the things all together were too much for Mr. (I've forgot his name) to take charge of; a paraphrase on the *King and Queen of Hearts*, of which I being the author beg Mr. Johnny Wordsworth's acceptance and opinion. *Liberal criticism*, as G. Dyer declares, I am always ready to attend to!—And that's all, I believe.

N. B. I must remain debtor to Dorothy for two hundred pens: but really Miss Stoddart (women are great gulfs of stationery), who is going home to Salisbury and has been with us some weeks,



has drained us to the very last pen ; by the time S. T. C. passes thro' London I reckon I shall be in full feather. No more news has transpired of that wanderer. I suppose he has found his way to some of his German friends.

*Apropos* of Spenser (you will find him mentioned a page or two before, near enough for an *apropos*), I was discoursing on poetry (as one's apt to deceive one's self, and when a person is willing to *talk* of what one likes, to believe that he also likes the same : as lovers do) with a young gentleman of my office who is deep read in Anacreon Moore, Lord Strangford, and the principal modern poets, and I happen'd to mention Epithalamiums and that I could shew him a very fine one of Spenser's. At the mention of this, my gentleman, who is a very fine gentleman, and is brother to the Miss Evans who Coleridge so narrowly escaped marrying, pricked up his ears and exprest great pleasure, and begged that I would give him leave to copy it : he did not care how long it was (for I objected the length), he should be very happy to see *anything by him*. Then pausing, and looking sad, he ejaculated POOR SPENCER ! I begged to know the reason of his ejaculation, thinking that Time had by this time softened down any calamities which the bard might have endured. — “ Why, poor fellow ! ” said he, “ he has lost his wife ! ” “ Lost his wife ? ” said I, “ Who are you talking of ? ” “ Why, Spencer,” said he. “ I've read the monody he wrote on the

occasion, and *a very pretty thing it is.*" This led to an explanation (it could be delay'd no longer) that the sound Spenser, which, when poetry is talk'd of, generally excites an image of an old bard in a ruff, and sometimes with it dim notions of Sir Philip Sidney and perhaps Lord Burleigh, had raised in my gentleman a quite contrary image of the Honourable William Spencer, who has translated some things from the German very prettily, which are publish'd with Lady Di. Beauclerk's designs.

Nothing like defining of terms when we talk. What blunders might I have fallen into of quite inapplicable criticism, but for this timely explanation!

N. B. At the beginning of *Edm.* Spenser (to prevent mistakes) I have copied from my own copy, and primarily from a book of Chalmers on Shakspeare, a sonnet of Spenser's never printed among his poems. It is curious as being manly and rather Miltonic, and as a sonnet of Spenser's with nothing in it about love or knighthood. I have no room for remembrances; but I hope our doing your commission will prove we do not quite forget you.

C. L.

#### NOTE

[In this letter Lamb refers to Edmund Spenser, and William Robert Spencer.]

CLXVIII.—TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

February 19, 1806.

Dear H.,— Godwin has just been here in his way from Johnson's. Johnson has had a fire in his house ; this happened about five weeks ago ; it was in the daytime, so it did not burn the house down, but did so much damage that the house must come down to be repaired : his nephew that we met on Hampstead Hill put it out ; well, this fire has put him so back that he craves one more month before he gives you an answer.

I will certainly goad Godwin (if necessary) to go again this very day four weeks ; but I am confident he will want no goading.

Three or four most capital auctions of pictures advertised. In May, Welbore Ellis Agar's, the first private collection in England, so Holcroft says. In March, Sir George Young's in Stratford Place (where Cosway lives), and a Mr. Hulse's at Blackheath, both very capital collections, and have been announc'd for some months. Also the Marquis of Lansdowne's pictures in March ; and though inferior to mention, lastly, the Truethsessian gallery. Don't your mouth water to be here ?

T'other night Loftus called, whom we have not seen since you went before. We meditate a stroll next Wednesday, fast-day. He happened to light upon Mr. Holcroft's wife and daughter, their first visit at our house.

Your brother called last night. We keep up our intimacy. He is going to begin a large Madonna and child from Mrs. H. and baby. I fear he goes astray after *ignes fatui*. He is a clever man. By the by, I saw a miniature of his as far excelling any in his shew cupboard (that of your sister not excepted) as that shew cupboard excels the shew things you see in windows — an old woman — damn her name! — but most superlative; he has it to clean — I'll ask him the name — but the best miniature I ever saw, equal to Cooper and them fellows. But for oil pictures! — what has he [to] do with Madonnas? if the Virgin Mary were alive and visitable, he would not hazard himself in a Covent Garden pit-door crowd to see her. It an't his style of beauty, is it? — But he will go on painting things he ought not to paint, and not painting things he ought to paint.

Manning is not gone to China, but talks of going this spring. God forbid!

Coleridge not heard of.

I, going to leave off smoke. In meantime am so smoky with last night's ten pipes that I must leave off.

Mary begs her kind remembrances.

Pray write to us.

This is no letter, but I supposed you grew anxious about Johnson.

N. B. — Have taken a room at three shillings a week, to be in between five and eight at night,

to avoid my *nocturnal*, alias *knock-eternal*, visitors. The first-fruits of my retirement has been a farce which goes to manager to-morrow. *Wish my ticket luck.*

God bless you, and do write.

Yours, *fumosissimus*,

C. LAMB

#### CLXIX.—TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

January — February, 1806.

Dear H., — I send you Tingry [*Painter's and Varnisher's Guide*] (pro[mising] you instruction] and [some] entertainment). I should not have delayed it [so] long, but have been waiting for Loftus's commission. I have made several graphical tours round and in the metropolis without discovering any trees that I would venture to recommend; *id est*, I have gone no farther than the shop [window], for such is my modesty, that if I explored internal se[crets I] should be laying out complimentary shillings rather than give trouble without remuneration. I have sent you a pretty emblematical thing which I happen to have in my possession: you may get some hints from it, though perhaps you may think it too tame; not sufficiently romantic, — the boughs not shooting fantastically enough, &c. But to supply poetry and wildness, you may read the *American Farmer* over again. Nevertheless, if you desire it, I will put my head within the shops; only speak your wants.



N. B. — If I do not hear in four days that you have received Tingry, &c., safe, I shall put you to the expense of a letter to ascertain whether this parcel has been deliver'd to you.

Yours ever,

C. L.

Johnson shall not be forgot at his month's end.

CLXX. — MARY LAMB TO SARAH  
STODDART

[March, 1806.]

My dear Sarah, — No intention of forfeiting my promise, but mere want of time, has prevented me from continuing my *journal*. You seem pleased with the long, stupid one I sent, and, therefore, I shall certainly continue to write at every opportunity. The reason why I have not had any time to spare, is because Charles has given himself some hollidays after the hard labour of finishing his farce, and, therefore, I have had none of the evening leisure I promised myself. Next week he promises to go to work again. I wish he may happen to hit upon some new plan, to his mind, for another farce: when once begun, I do not fear his perseverance, but the hollidays he has allowed himself, I fear, will unsettle him. I look forward to next week with the same kind of anxiety I did to the first entrance at the new lodging. We have had, as you know,

so many teasing anxieties of late, that I have got a kind of habit of foreboding that we shall never be comfortable, and that he will never settle to work : which I know is wrong, and which I will try with all my might to overcome—for certainly, if I could but see things as they really are, our prospects are considerably improved since the memorable day of Mrs. Fenwick's last visit. I have heard nothing of that good lady, or of the Fells, since you left us.

We have been visiting a little — to Norris's, to Godwin's ; and last night we did not come home from Captain Burney's till two o'clock : the *Saturday night* was changed to *Friday*, because Rickman could not be there to-night. We had the best *tea things*, and the litter all cleared away, and everything as handsome as possible — Mrs. Rickman being of the party. Mrs. Rickman is much *increased in size* since we saw her last, and the alteration in her strait shape wonderfully improves her. Phillips was there, and Charles had a long batch of Cribbage with him : and, upon the whole, we had the most chearful evening I have known there a long time. To-morrow, we dine at Holcroft's. These things rather fatigue me ; but I look for a quiet week next week, and hope for better times. We have had Mrs. Brooks and all the Martins, and we have likewise been there ; so that I seem to have been in a continual bustle lately. I do not think Charles cares so much for the Martins as he did, which is a fact

you will be glad to hear — though you must not name them when you write : always remember, when I tell you anything about them, not to mention their names in return.

We have had a letter from your brother, by the same mail as yours, I suppose ; he says he does not mean to return till summer, and that is all he says about himself ; his letter being entirely filled with a long story about Lord Nelson — but nothing more than what the newspapers have been full of, such as his last words, &c. Why does he tease you with so much *good advice* ? is it merely to fill up his letters as he filled ours with Lord Nelson's exploits ? or has any new thing come out against you ? has he discovered Mr. Curse-a-rat's correspondence ? I hope you will not write to that *news-sending* gentleman any more. I promised never more to give my *advice*, but one may be allowed to *hope* a little ; and I also hope you will have something to tell me soon about Mr. W[hite] : have you seen him yet ? I am sorry to hear your Mother is not better, but I am in a hoping humour just now, and I cannot help hoping that we shall all see happier days. The bells are just now ringing for the taking of the *Cape of Good Hope*.

I have written to Mrs. Coleridge to tell her that her husband is at Naples ; your brother slightly named his being there, but he did not say that he had heard from him himself. Charles is very busy at the Office ; he will be kept there to-day till

seven or eight o'clock : and he came home very *smoky and drinky* last night ; so that I am afraid a hard day's work will not agree very well with him.

O dear ! what shall I say next ? Why this I will say next, that I wish you was with me ; I have been eating a mutton chop all alone, and I have been just looking in the pint porter pot, which I find quite empty, and yet I am still very dry. If you was with me, we would have a glass of brandy and water ; but it is quite impossible to drink brandy and water by oneself ; therefore, I must wait with patience till the kettle boils. I hate to drink tea alone, it is worse than dining alone. We have got a fresh cargo of biscuits from Captain Burney's. I have ——

*March 14.*—Here I was interrupted ; and a long, tedious interval has intervened, during which I have had neither time nor inclination to write a word. The Lodging—that pride and pleasure of your heart and mine—is given up, *and here he is again*—Charles, I mean—as unsettled and as undetermined as ever. When he went to the poor lodging, after the hollidays I told you he had taken, he could not endure the solitariness of them, and I had no rest for the sole of my foot till I promised to believe his solemn protestations that he could and would write as well at home as there. Do you believe this ?

I have no power over Charles : he will do—what he will do. But I ought to have some little influence over myself. And therefore I am most

manfully resolving to turn over a new leaf with my own mind. Your visit to us, though not a very comfortable one to yourself, has been of great use to me. I set you up in my fancy as a kind of *thing* that takes an interest in my concerns; and I hear you talking to me, and arguing the matter very learnedly, when I give way to despondency. You shall hear a good account of me, and the progress I make in altering my fretful temper to a calm and quiet one. It is but being once thorowly convinced one is wrong, to make one resolve to do so no more; and I know my dismal faces have been almost as great a drawback upon Charles's comfort, as his feverish, teasing ways have been upon mine. Our love for each other has been the torment of our lives hitherto. I am most seriously intending to bend the whole force of my mind to counteract this, and I think I see some prospect of success.

Of Charles ever bringing any work to pass at home, I am very doubtful; and of the farce succeeding, I have little or no hope; but if I could once get into the way of being chearful myself, I should see an easy remedy in leaving town and living cheaply, almost wholly alone; but till I do find we really are comfortable alone, and by ourselves, it seems a dangerous experiment. We shall certainly stay where we are till after next Christmas; and in the mean time, as I told you before, all my whole thoughts shall be to *change* myself into just such a chearful soul as you would be in



a lone house, with no companion but your brother, if you had nothing to vex you—nor no means of wandering after *Curse-a-rats*.

Do write soon: though I write all about myself, I am thinking all the while of you, and I am uneasy at the length of time it seems since I heard from you. Your Mother, and Mr. White, is running continually in my head; and this *second winter* makes me think how cold, damp, and forlorn your solitary house will feel to you. I would your feet were perched up again on our fender.

Manning is not yet gone. Mrs. Holcroft is brought to bed. Mrs. Reynolds has been confined at home with illness, but is recovering.

God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

M. LAMB

#### CLXXI.—TO JOHN RICKMAN

March, 1806.

Dear Rickman,—I send you some papers about a salt-water soap, for which the inventor is desirous of getting a Parliamentary reward, like Dr. Jenner. Whether such a project be feasible I mainly doubt, taking for granted the equal utility. I should suppose the usual way of paying such projectors is by patents and contracts. The patent, you see, he has got. A contract he is about with the Navy Board. Meantime, the projector is hungry. Will you answer me two ques-

tions, and return them with the papers as soon as you can? *Imprimis*, is there any chance of success in application to Parliament for a reward? Did you ever hear of the invention? You see its benefits and saving to the nation (always the first motive with a true projector) are feelingly set forth: the last paragraph but one of the estimate, in enumerating the shifts poor seamen are put to, even approaches to the pathetic. But, agreeing to all he says, is there the remotest chance of Parliament giving the projector anything; and *when* should application be made, now or after a report (if he can get it) from the Navy Board?

Secondly, let the infeasibility be as great as you will, you will oblige me by telling me the way of introducing such an application to Parliament, without buying over a majority of members, which is totally out of the projector's power. I vouch nothing for the soap myself; for I always wash in *fresh water*, and find it answer tolerably well for all purposes of cleanliness; nor do I know the projector; but a relation of mine has put me on writing to you, for whose parliamentary knowledge he has great veneration.

P. S. The Capt. and Mrs. Burney and Phillips take their chance at cribbage here on Wednesday. Will you and Mrs. R. join the party? Mary desires her compliments to Mrs. R., and joins in the invitation.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

CLXXII.—TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

March 15, 1806.

Dear H.,—I am a little surprised at no letter from you. This day week, to wit, Saturday, the 8th of March, 1806, I booked off by the Wem coach, Bull and Mouth Inn, directed to *you*, at the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt's, Wem, Shropshire, a parcel containing, besides a book, &c., a rare print, which I take to be a Titian; begging the said W. H. to acknowledge the receipt thereof; which he not having done, I conclude the said parcel to be lying at the inn, and may be lost; for which reason, lest you may be a Wales-hunting at this instant, I have authorised any of your family, whosoever first gets this, to open it, that so precious a parcel may not moulder away for want of looking after. What do you in Shropshire when so many fine pictures are a-going, a-going every day in London?

Monday I visit the Marquis of Lansdowne's, in Berkeley Square. Catalogue 2*s.* 6*d.* Leonardos in plenty. Some other day this week I go to see Sir Wm. Young's, in Stratford Place. Hulse's, of Blackheath, are also to be sold this month; and in May, the first private collection in Europe, Welbore Ellis Agar's. And there are you, perverting nature in lying landscapes, filched from old rusty Titians, such as I can scrape up here to send you, with an additament from Shropshire nature thrown in to make the whole look unnatural.

I am afraid of your mouth watering when I tell you that Manning and I got into Angerstein's on Wednesday. *Mon Dieu!* Such Claudes! Four Claudes bought for more than £10,000 (those who talk of Wilson being equal to Claude are either mainly ignorant or stupid); one of these was perfectly miraculous. What colours short of *bonâ fide* sunbeams it could be painted in, I am not earthly colourman enough to say; but I did not think it had been in the possibility of things. Then, a music-piece by Titian — a thousand-pound picture — five figures standing behind a piano, the sixth playing; none of the heads, as M. observed, indicating great men, or affecting it, but so sweetly disposed; all leaning separate ways, but so easy — like a flock of some divine shepherd; the colouring, like the economy of the picture, so sweet and harmonious — as good as Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night*, — *almost*, that is. It will give you a love of order, and cure you of restless, fidgety passions for a week after — more musical than the music which it would, but cannot, yet in a manner *does*, show. I have no room for the rest. Let me say, Angerstein sits in a room — his study (only that and the library are shown) — when he writes a common letter, as I am doing, surrounded with twenty pictures worth £60,000. What a luxury! Apicius and Helio-gabalus, hide your diminished heads!

Yours, my dear painter,

C. LAMB

## CLXXIII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

May 10, 1806.

My dear Manning, — I didn't know what your going was till I shook a last fist with you, and then 't was just like having shaken hands with a wretch on the fatal scaffold, and when you are down the ladder, you can never stretch out to him again. Mary says you are dead, and there's nothing to do but to leave it to time to do for us in the end what it always does for those who mourn for people in such a case. But she'll see by your letter you are not quite dead. A little kicking and agony, and then——. Martin Burney *took me out* a-walking that evening, and we talked of Mister Manning; and then I came home and smoked for you; and at twelve o'clock came home Mary and Monkey Louisa from the play, and there was more talk and more smoking, and they all seemed first-rate characters, because they knew a certain person. But what's the use of talking about 'em.

By the time you'll have made your escape from the Kalmuks, you'll have staid so long I shall never be able to bring to your mind who Mary was, who will have died about a year before, nor who the Holcrofts were! Me perhaps you will mistake for Phillips, or confound me with Mr. Dawe, because you saw us together. Mary (whom you seem to remember yet) is not quite easy that she had not a formal parting from you. I wish



it had so happened. But you must bring her a token, a shawl or something, and remember a sprightly little mandarin for our mantel-piece, as a companion to the child I am going to purchase at the Museum. She says you saw her writings about the other day, and she wishes you should know what they are. She is doing for Godwin's bookseller twenty of Shakspear's plays, to be made into children's tales. Six are already done by her, to wit, *The Tempest*, *Winter's Tale*, *Midsummer Night*, *Much Ado*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Cymbeline: The Merchant of Venice* is in forwardness. I have done *Othello* and *Macbeth*, and mean to do all the tragedies. I think it will be popular among the little people. Besides money, — it is to bring in sixty guineas. Mary has done them capitally, I think you'd think. These are the humble amusements we propose, while you are gone to plant the cross of Christ among barbarous pagan anthropophagi.

*Quam homo homini praestat!* but then, perhaps, you'll get murder'd, and we shall die in our beds with a fair literary reputation. Be sure, if you see any of those people whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders, that you make a draught of them. It will be very curious. O Manning, I am serious to sinking almost, when I think that all those evenings which you have made so pleasant are gone perhaps forever. Four years you talk of, maybe ten, and you may come back and find such alterations! Some circumstance may grow

up to you or to me, that may be a bar to the return of any such intimacy. I daresay all this is Hum, and that all will come back ; but indeed we die many deaths before we die, and I am almost sick when I think that such a hold as I had of you is gone. I have friends, but some of 'em are changed. Marriage, or some circumstance, rises up to make them not the same. But I felt sure of you. And that last token you gave me of expressing a wish to have my name joined with yours, you know not how it affected me : like a legacy.

God bless you in every way you can form a wish. May He give you health and safety, and the accomplishment of all your objects, and return you again to us, to gladden some fireside or other (I suppose we shall be moved from the Temple). I will nurse the remembrance of your steadiness and quiet, which used to infuse something like itself into our nervous minds. Mary called you our ventilator. Farewell, and take her best wishes and mine.

One thing more, — when you get to Canton, you will most likely see a young friend of mine, Inspector of Teas, named Ball. He is a very good fellow and I should like to have my name talked of in China. Give my kind remembrances to the same Ball.

Good-bye.

C. L.

[*On one of the margins is added:*]

I have made strict inquiries through my friend Thompson as to your affairs with the Company. If there had been a committee yesterday an order would have been sent to the captain to draw on them for your passage money, but there was no committee. But in the secretary's orders to receive you on board, it was specified that the Company would defray your passage, all the orders about you to the supercargoes are certainly in your ship. Here I will manage anything you may want done. What can I add but take care of yourself. We drink tea with the Holcrofts to-morrow.

#### NOTE

[Addressed to "Mr. Manning, Passenger on Board the *Thames*, East Indiaman, Portsmouth."

Manning sailed for China this month. He did not return to England until 1817. His nominal purpose was to practise medicine there, not to spread Christianity, as Lamb suggests, — probably in fun.

This is Manning's reply to Lamb's letter, —

Dear Lamb, — As we are not sailed yet, and I have a few minutes, why should not I give you a line to say that I received your kind letter yesterday, and shall read it again before I have done with it. I am sorry I had not time to call on Mary, but I did not even call on my own father, and he's seventy and loves me like a father. I don't know that you can do anything for me at the India House : if you hear anything there about me, communicate it to Mr. Crabtree, 13, Newgate Street. I am not dead, nor dying — some people go into Yorkshire for four [years], and I have no currant jelly aboard. Tell Holcroft I received his kind letter.

T. MANNING, for ever. — E. V. LUCAS.]

CLXXIV.—MARY LAMB TO SARAH  
STODDART

June 2, 1806.

My dear Sarah, — You say truly that I have sent you too many make-believe letters. I do not mean to serve you so again, if I can help it. I have been very ill for some days past with the toothache. Yesterday, I had it drawn ; and I feel myself greatly relieved, but far from easy, for my head and my jaws still ache ; and, being unable to do any business, I would wish to write you a long letter, to atone for my former offences ; but I feel so languid, that I am afraid wishing is all I can do.

I am sorry you are so worried with business ; and I am still more sorry for your sprained ancle. You ought not to walk upon it. What is the matter between you and your good-natured maid you used to boast of ? and what the devil is the matter with your Aunt ? You say she is discontented. You must bear with them as well as you can ; for, doubtless, it is your poor Mother's teasing that puts you all out of sorts. I pity you from my heart.

We cannot come to see you this summer, nor do I think it advisable to come and incommode you, when you for the same expence could come to us. Whenever you feel yourself disposed to run away from your troubles, come up to us again. I wish it was not such a long, expensive journey,

then you could run backwards and forwards every month or two.

I am very sorry you still hear nothing from Mr. White. I am afraid that is all at an end. What do you intend to do about Mr. Turner?

I believe Mr. Rickman is well again, but I have not been able to get out lately to enquire, because of my toothache. Louisa Martin is quite well again.

William Hazlitt, the brother of him you know, is in town. I believe you have heard us say we like him? He came in good time; for the loss of Manning made Charles very dull, and he likes Hazlitt better than anybody, except Manning. My toothache has moped Charles to death: you know how he hates to see people ill.

Mrs. Reynolds has been this month past at Deptford, so that I never know when Monday comes. I am glad you have got your Mother's pension.

My *Tales* are to be published in separate story-books; I mean, in single stories, like the children's little shilling books. I cannot send you them in manuscript, because they are all in the Godwins' hands; but one will be published very soon, and then you shall have it *all in print*. I go on very well, and have no doubt but I shall always be able to hit upon some such kind of job to keep going on. I think I shall get fifty pounds a year at the lowest calculation; but as I have not yet seen any *money* of my own earning, for we do



not expect to be paid till Christmas, I do not feel the good fortune, that has so unexpectedly befallen me, half so much as I ought to do. But another year, no doubt, I shall perceive it.

When I write again, you will hear tidings of the farce, for Charles is to go in a few days to the managers to inquire about it. But that must now be a next-year's business too, even if it does succeed; so it's all looking forward, and no prospect of present gain. But that's better than no hopes at all, either for present or future times.

Charles has written *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and has begun *Hamlet*; you would like to see us, as we often sit, writing on one table (but not on one cushion sitting), like Hermia and Helena in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*; or, rather, like an old literary Darby and Joan: I taking snuff, and he groaning all the while, and saying he can make nothing of it, which he always says till he has finished, and then he finds out he has made something of it.

If I tell you that you Widow-Blackacreise, you must tell me I Tale-ise, for my *Tales* seem to be all the subject matter I write about; and when you see them, you will think them poor little baby-stories to make such a talk about; but I have no news to send, nor nothing, in short, to say that is worth paying twopence for. I wish I could get franks, then I should not care how short or stupidly I wrote.

Charles smokes still, and will smoke to the end of the chapter.

Martin [Burney] has just been here. My *Tales* (*again*) and Charles's Farce has made the boy mad to turn author ; and he has written a Farce, and he has made the *Winter's Tale* into a story ; but what Charles says of himself is really true of Martin, for *he can make nothing at all of it* : and I have been talking very eloquently this morning to convince him that nobody can write farces, &c., under thirty years of age. And so I suppose he will go home and new model his farce.

What is Mr. Turner ? and what is likely to come of him ? and how do you like him ? and what do you intend to do about it ? I almost wish you to remain single till your Mother dies, and then come and live with us ; and we would either get you a husband, or teach you how to live comfortably without. I think I should like to have you always to the end of our lives living with us ; and I do not know any reason why that should not be, except for the great fancy you seem to have for marrying, which after all is but a hazardous kind of an affair : but, however, do as you like ; every man knows best what pleases himself best.

I have known many single men I should have liked in my life (*if it had suited them*) for a husband : but very few husbands have I ever wished was mine, which is rather against the state in general ; but one never is disposed to envy wives

their good husbands. So much for marrying — but, however, get married, if you can.

I say we shall not come and see you, and I feel sure we shall not : but, if some sudden freak was to come into our wayward heads, could you at all manage? — Your Mother we should not mind, but I think still it would be so vastly inconvenient. — I am certain we shall not come, and yet *you* may tell me, when you write, if it would be horribly inconvenient if we did ; and do not tell me any lies, but say truly whether you would rather we did or not.

God bless you, my dearest Sarah ! I wish, for your sake, I could have written a very amusing letter ; but do not scold, for my head aches sadly. Don't mind my headache, for before you get this it will be well, being only from the pains of my jaws and teeth. Farewell.

Yours affectionately, M. LAMB

#### NOTE

[This letter contains the first mention to Sarah Stoddart of William Hazlitt, who was shortly to put an end to the claims both of Mr. White and Mr. Turner.

The *Tales from Shakespear*, although mainly Mary Lamb's book, did not bear her name for many years, not until after her brother's death. Her connection with it was, however, made public in more than one literary year-book of her day. Originally they were to be unsigned, but Godwin "cheated" Lamb into putting a name to them (see Letter of Jan. 29, 1807). The single stories, which Mrs. Godwin issued at sixpence each, are now excessively rare. The ordinary first edition in two volumes is a valuable possession, much desired by collectors. — E. V. LUCAS.]

CLXXV. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

June 26, 1806.

Dear Wordsworth, — We got the six pounds safe in your sister's letters ; are pleased, you may be sure, with the good news of Mrs. W. ; hope all is well over by this time. "A fine boy ! — have you any more ? one more and a girl — poor copies of me ;" *vide Mr. H.* a farce which the proprietors have done me the honor — but I will set down Mr. Wroughton's own words.

N. B. The ensuing letter was sent in answer to one which I wrote begging to know if my piece had any chance, as I might make alterations, &c. I writing on the Monday, there comes this letter on the Wednesday. Attend.

[*Copy of a Letter from Mr. R. Wroughton.*]

Sir, — Your piece of *Mr. H.*, I am desired to say, is accepted at Drury Lane Theatre, by the proprietors, and, if agreeable to you, will be brought forwards when the proper opportunity serves. The piece shall be sent to you for your alterations in the course of a few days, as the same is not in my hands, but with the proprietors.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD WROUGHTON.

(Dated) June 11, 1806.

On the following Sunday Mr. Tobin comes. The

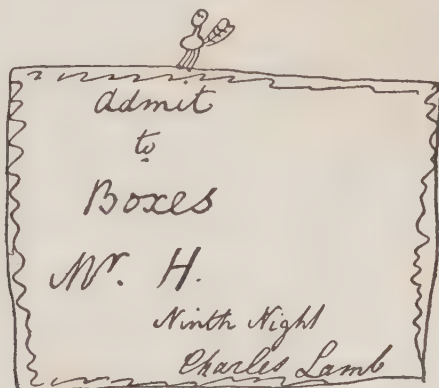
scent of a manager's letter brought him. He would have gone further any day on such a business. I read the letter to him. He deems it authentic and peremptory. Our conversation naturally fell upon pieces, different sorts of pieces; what is the best way of offering a piece, how far the caprice of managers is an obstacle in the way of a piece, how to judge of the merits of a piece, how long a piece may remain in the hands of the managers before it is acted; and my piece, and your piece, and my poor brother's piece — my poor brother was all his life endeavouring to get a piece accepted.

I am not sure that when *my poor brother* bequeathed the care of his pieces to Mr. James Tobin he did not therein convey a legacy which in some measure mollified the otherwise first stupefactions of grief. It can't be expected that the present Earl Nelson passes all his time in watering the laurels of the admiral with Right Reverend Tears. Certainly he steals a fine day now and then to plot how to lay out the grounds and mansion at Burnham most suitably to the late earl's taste, if he had lived, and how to spend the hundred thousand pound Parliament has given him in erecting some little neat monument to his memory.

*Mr. H.* — I wrote that in mere wantonness of triumph. Have nothing more to say about it. The managers, I thank my stars, have decided its merits forever. They are the best judges of



pieces, and it would be insensible in me to affect a false modesty after the very flattering letter which I have received and the ample —



I think this will be as good a pattern for orders as I can think on. A little thin flowery border round, neat not gaudy, and the Drury Lane Apollo with the harp at the top. Or shall I have no Apollo? — simply nothing? Or perhaps the Comic Muse?

The same form, only I think without the Apollo, will serve for the pit and galleries. I think it will be best to write my name at full length; but then if I give away a great many, that will be tedious. Perhaps *Cb. Lamb* will do. BOXES, now I think on it, I'll have in Capitals. The rest in a neat Italian hand. Or better perhaps, **Boxes**, in old English character, like Madoc or Thalaba?

I suppose you know poor Mountagu has lost his wife. That has been the reason for my send-

ing off all we have got of yours separately. I thought it a bad time to trouble him. The tea, 25 lb. in five 5 lb. papers, two sheets to each, with the chocolate, which we were afraid Mrs. W. would want, comes in one box and the hats in a small one. I booked them off last night by the Kendal waggon. There comes with this letter (no, it comes a day or two earlier) a letter for you from the doctor at Malta, about Coleridge, just received. Nothing of certainty, you see, only that he is not at Malta.

We supt with the Clarksons one night. Mrs. Clarkson pretty well. Mr. C. somewhat fidgety, but a good man. The baby [Mrs. Godwin] has been on a visit to Mrs. Charlotte Smith, novelist and morals-trainer, but is returned.

Mary is just stuck fast in *All's Well that Ends Well*. She complains of having to set forth so many female characters in boys' clothes. She begins to think Shakspear must have wanted imagination. I, to encourage her (for she often faints in the prosecution of her great work), flatter her with telling her how well such a play and such a play is done. But she is stuck fast, and I have been obliged to promise to assist her. To do this it will be necessary to leave off tobacco. But I had some thoughts of doing that before, for I sometimes think it does not agree with me.

W. Hazlitt is in town. I took him to see a very pretty girl professedly, where there were two young girls — the very head and sum of the Girl-

ery was two young girls; they neither laughed nor sneered nor giggled nor whispered, but they were young girls; and he sat and frowned blacker and blacker, indignant that there should be such a thing as youth and beauty, till he tore me away before supper in perfect misery and owned he could not bear young girls. They drove him mad. So I took him home to my old nurse, where he recover'd perfect tranquillity. Independent of this, and as I am not a young girl myself, he is a great acquisition to us. He is (rather imprudently, I think) printing a political pamphlet on his own account, and will have to pay for the paper, &c. The first duty of an author, I take it, is never to pay anything. But *non cuius attigit adire Corinthum*. The managers, I thank my stars, have settled that question for me.

Yours truly, C. LAMB

CLXXVI.—MARY LAMB TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

August 29, 1806.

My dear Miss Wordsworth, — After I had put my letter in the post yesterday I was uneasy all the night because of some few expressions relative to poor Coleridge — I mean, in saying I wished your brother would come to town and that I wished your brother would consult Mr. Southey. I am very sure your brother will take no step in consequence of any foolish advice that I can give

him, so far I am easy, but the painful reflections I have had during a sleepless night has induced me to write merely to quiet myself, because I have felt ever since, that in the present situation of Coleridge, returned after an absence of two years, and feeling a reluctance to return to his family, I ought not to throw in the weight of a hair in advising you or your brother, and that I ought not to have so much as named to you his reluctance to return to Keswick, for so little is it in my power to calculate on his actions that perhaps in a few days he may be on his return home.

You, my dear friend, will perfectly understand me that I do not mean that I might not freely say to you anything that is upon my mind — but [the] truth is, my poor mind is so weak that I never dare trust my own judgement in anything: what I think one hour a fit of low spirits makes me unthink the next. Yesterday I wrote, anxiously longing for Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. Southey to endeavour to bring Mrs. C. to consent to a separation, and to-day I think of the letter I received from Mrs. Coleridge, telling me, as joyful news, that her husband is arrived, and I feel it very wrong in me even in the remotest degree to do anything to prevent her seeing that husband — she and her husband being the only people who ought to be concerned in the affair.

All that I have said, or meant to say, you will perfectly understand, it being nothing more than

to beg you will consider both my letter to-day and yesterday as if you had not read either, they being both equally the effect of low spirits, brought on by the fatigue of Coleridge's conversation and the anxious care even to misery which I have felt since he has been here, that something could be done to make such an admirable creature happy. Nor has, I assure you, Mrs. Coleridge been without her full share in adding to my uneasiness. They say she grows fat and is very happy — and people say I grow fat and look happy —

It is foolish to tease you about my anxieties, you will feel quite enough on the subject yourself, and your little ones are all ill, and no doubt you are fatigued with nursing, but I could not help writing to-day, to tell you how what I said yesterday has vexed and worried me. Burn both these foolish letters and do not name the subject of them, because Charles will either blame me for having written something improper or he will laugh at me for my foolish fears about nothing.

Though I wish you not to take notice of what I have said, yet I shall rejoice to see a letter from you, and I hope, when you have half an hour's leisure, to see a line from you. We have not heard from Coleridge since he went out of town, but I dare say you have heard either from him or Mrs. Clarkson. I remain, my dear friend,

Yours most affectionately,

M. LAMB



## NOTE

[For the full understanding of Mary Lamb's letter it is necessary to read Coleridge's Life and his Letters. Coleridge on his return from abroad reached London August 17, 1806, and took up his quarters with the Lambs on the following day. He once more joined Stuart, then editing the *Courier*, but much of his old enthusiasm had gone. In Mr. Dykes Campbell's words, —

Almost his first words to Stuart were : "I am literally afraid, even to cowardice, to ask for any person, or of any person." Spite of the friendliest and most unquestioning welcome from all most dear to him, it was the saddest of home-comings, for the very sympathy held out with both hands induced only a bitter, hopeless feeling of remorse; a —

"Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain; —  
And genius given, and knowledge won in vain;" —

of broken promises, — promises to friends and promises to himself; and above all, sense of a will paralysed — dead, perhaps, killed by his own hand.

Coleridge remained at Lamb's until August 29, afterwards taking rooms in the *Courier* office at 348 Strand. Meanwhile his reluctance to meet or communicate with his wife was causing his friends much concern, none more so than Mary Lamb, who wrote at least two letters filled with anxious sympathy to Dorothy Wordsworth on the subject, asking for the mediation of Wordsworth or Southey. Her earlier letter is missing.

To quote Mr. Dykes Campbell again, —

On September 16 — just a month after his landing — he wrote his first letter to his wife, to say that he might be expected at Greta Hall on the 29th.

Before this, Wordsworth had informed Sir George Beaumont that Coleridge "dare not go home, he recoils so much from the thought of domesticating with Mrs. Coleridge, with whom, though on many accounts he much respects her, he is so miserable that he dare not encounter it. What a deplorable thing! I have written to him to say that if he does not come down immediately I must insist upon seeing him somewhere. If he appoints London I shall go.

I believe if anything good is to be done for him it must be done by me."

It was this letter of Wordsworth, doubtless, which drew Coleridge to the North. Dorothy's letter to Lady Beaumont, written on receipt of the

announcement of Coleridge's home-coming, goes copiously and minutely into the reasons for the estrangement between the poet and his wife. Miss Wordsworth still had hopes of an improvement. "Poor soul!" she writes, "he had a struggle of many years, striving to bring Mrs. C. to a change of temper, and something like communion with him in his enjoyments. He is now, I trust, effectually convinced that he has no power of that sort," and may, she thinks, if he will be "reconciled to that one great want, want of sympathy," live at home in peace and quiet. "Mrs. C. has many excellent properties, as you observe; she is unremitting in her attention as a nurse to her children, and, indeed, I believe she would have made an excellent wife to many persons. Coleridge is as little fitted for her as she for him, and I am truly sorry for her."

It might perhaps be stated here that the separation was agreed upon in December. At the end of that month Coleridge visited the Wordsworths at Coleorton with Hartley, and in a few days began to be "more like his old self" — in Dorothy Wordsworth's phrase. — E. V. LUCAS.]

#### CLXXVII.—MARY LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

Dear Coleridge, — I have read your silly, very silly, letter, and between laughing and crying I hardly know how to answer it. You are too serious and too kind a vast deal, for we are not much used to either seriousness or kindness from our present friends, and therefore your letter has put me into a greater hurry of spirits than your pleasant segar did last night, for believe me your two odd faces amused me much more than the mighty transgression vexed me. If Charles had not smoked last night his virtue would not have lasted longer than to-night, and now perhaps with a little of your good counsel he will refrain. Be not too serious if he smokes all the time you are with us — a few chearful evenings spent with

you serves to bear up our spirits many a long and weary year — and the very being led into the crime by your segar that you thought so harmless, will serve for our amusement many a dreary time when we can get no letter nor hear no tidings of you.

You positively must write to Mrs. Coleridge this day, and you must write here, that I may know you write, or you must come and dictate a letter for me to write to her. I know all that you would say in defence of not writing and I allow in full force everything that [you] can say or think, but yet a letter from me or you *shall go to-day*.

I wanted to tell you, but feared to begin the subject, how well your children are, how Pypos thrives and what a nice child Sara is, and above all I hear such favorable accounts from Southey, from Wordsworth and Hazlitt, of Hartley.

I have got Wordsworth's letters out for you to look at, but you shall not see them or talk of them without you like — Only come here as soon as you receive this, and I will not teaze you about writing, but will manage a few lines, Charles and I between us. But something like a letter shall go to-day.

Come directly.

Yours affectionately,

M. LAMB

CLXXVIII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

December 5, 1806.

Manning, your letter dated Hottentots, August the what-was-it? came to hand. I can scarce hope that mine will have the same luck. China! Canton! bless us—how it strains the imagination and makes it ache! I write under another uncertainty, whether it can go to-morrow by a ship which I have just learned is going off direct to your part of the world, or whether the despatches may not be sealed up and this have to wait, for if it is detained here, it will grow staler in a fortnight than in a five months' voyage coming to you. It will be a point of conscience to send you none but bran-new news (the latest edition), which will but grow the better, like oranges, for a sea voyage. Oh, that you should be so many hemispheres off!—if I speak incorrectly you can correct me—why, the simplest death or marriage that takes place here must be important to you as news in the old Bastile. There's your friend Tuthill has got away from France; you remember France? and Tuthill?—ten to one but he writes by this post, if he don't get my note in time, apprising him of the vessel sailing. Know then that he has found means to obtain leave from Bonaparte (without making use of any *incredible romantic pretences* as some have done, who never meant to fulfil them) to come home; and I have seen him here and at Holcroft's. I have likewise seen his wife, this elegant little

French woman whose hair reaches to her heels,—by the same token that Tom (Tommy H.) took the comb out of her head, not expecting the issue, and it fell down to the ground to his utter consternation, two ells long. An't you glad about Tuthill?

Now then be sorry for Holcroft, whose new play, called the *Vindictive Man*, was damned about a fortnight since. It died in part of its own weakness, and in part for being choked up with bad actors. The two principal parts were destined to Mrs. Jordan and Mr. Bannister (he is a fellow with the make of a jockey, and the air of a lamplighter), but Mrs. J. has not come to terms with the managers, they have had some squabble, and Bannister shot some of his fingers off by the going off of a gun. So Miss Duncan had her part, and Mr. de Camp (a vulgar brother of Miss de Camp), took his. His part, the principal comic hope of the play, was most unluckily Goldfinch, taken out of the *Road to Ruin*, not only the same character, but the identical Goldfinch—the same as Falstaff is in two plays of Shakspeare. As the devil of ill-luck would have it, half the audience did not know that H[olcroft] had written it, but were displeased at his stealing from the *Road to Ruin*; and those who might have borne a gentlemanly coxcomb with his “That’s your sort,” “Go it”—such as Lewis is—did not relish the intolerable vulgarity and inanity of the idea stript of his manner. De Camp was hooted, more than hist, hooted and bellowed off the stage before the second act was finished, so



that the remainder of his part was forced to be, with some violence to the play, omitted. In addition to this, a whore was another principal character — a most unfortunate choice in this moral day. The audience were as scandalised as if you were to introduce such a personage to their private tea-tables. Besides, her action in the play was gross — wheedling an old man into marriage. But the mortal blunder of the play was that which, oddly enough, H. took pride in, and exultingly told me of the night before it came out, that there were no less than eleven principal characters in it, and I believe he meant of the men only, for the play-bill exprest as much, not reckoning one woman and one whore; and true it was, for Mr. Powell, Mr. Raymond, Mr. Bartlett, Mr. H. Sidons, Mr. Barrymore, &c. &c., — to the number of eleven, — had all parts equally prominent, and there was as much of them in quantity and rank as of the hero and heroine; and most of them gentlemen who seldom appear but as the hero's friend in a farce, — for a minute or two, — and here they all had their ten-minute speeches, and one of them gave the audience a serious account how he was now a lawyer, but had been a poet, and then a long enumeration of the inconveniences of authorship, rascally booksellers, reviewers, &c.; which first set the audience a-gaping; but I have said enough.

You will be so sorry that you will not think the best of me for my detail; but news is news at Canton. Poor H[olcroft] I fear will feel the dis-

appointment very seriously in a pecuniary light. From what I can learn he has saved nothing. You and I were hoping one day that he had; but I fear he has nothing but his pictures and books, and a no very flourishing business, and to be obliged to part with his long-necked Guido that hangs opposite as you enter, and the game-piece that hangs in the back drawing-room, and all those Vandykes, &c.! God should temper the wind to the shorn connoisseur. I hope I need not say to you, that I feel for the weather-beaten author and for all his household. I assure you his fate has soured a good deal the pleasure I should have otherwise taken in my own little farce being accepted, and I hope about to be acted; it is in rehearsal actually, and I expect it to come out next week. It is kept a sort of secret, and the rehearsals have gone on privately, lest by many folks knowing it, the story should come out, which would infallibly damn it. You remember I had sent it before you went. Wroughton read it, and was much pleased with it. I speedily got an answer. I took it to make alterations, and lazily kept it some months, then took courage and furbished it up in a day or two and took it. In less than a fortnight I heard the principal part was given to Elliston, who liked it, and only wanted a prologue, which I have since done and sent; and I had a note the day before yesterday from the manager, Wroughton (bless his fat face! he is not a bad actor in some things), to say

that I should be summoned to the rehearsal after the next, which next was to be yesterday. I had no idea it was so forward. I have had no trouble, attended no reading or rehearsal, made no interest; what a contrast to the usual parade of authors! But it is peculiar to modesty to do all things without noise or pomp! I have some suspicion it will appear in public on Wednesday next, for Wroughton says in his note, it is so forward that if wanted it may come out next week, and a new melodrama is announced for every day till then: and “a new farce is in rehearsal,” is put up in the bills. Now you’d like to know the subject. The title is *Mr. H.*,—no more; how simple, how taking! A great H. sprawling over the play-bill and attracting eyes at every corner. The story is a coxcomb appearing at Bath, vastly rich — all the ladies dying for him — all bursting to know who he is — but he goes by no other name than Mr. H. — a curiosity like that of the dames of Strasburg about the man with the great nose. But I won’t tell you any more about it. Yes, I will; but I can’t give you an idea how I have done it. I’ll just tell you that after much vehement admiration, when his true name comes out, “Hogsflesh,” all the women shun him, avoid him, and not one can be found to change their name for him. That’s the idea. How flat it is here! — but how whimsical in the farce! And only think how hard upon me it is that the ship is despatched to-morrow,

and my triumph cannot be ascertained till the Wednesday after ; but all China will ring of it by and by.

N. B. (But this is a secret.) The Professor has got a tragedy coming out with the young Roscius in it in January next, as we say — January last it will be with you — and though it is a profound secret now, as all his affairs are, it cannot be much of one by the time you read this. However, don't let it go any further. I understand there are dramatic exhibitions in China. One would not like to be forestalled.

Do you find in all this stuff I have written anything like those feelings which one should send my old adventuring friend, that is gone to wander among Tartars and may never come again? I don't; but your going away, and all about you, is a threadbare topic. I have worn it out with thinking: it has come to me when I have been dull with anything, till my sadness has seemed more to have come from it than to have introduced it. I want you, you don't know how much; but if I had you here in my European garret, we should but talk over such stuff as I have written — so —.

Those *Tales from Shakespear* are near coming out, and Mary has begun a new work. Mr. Dawe is turned author: he has been in such a way lately — Dawe, the painter, I mean. He sits and stands about at Holcroft's and says nothing; then sighs and leans his head on his hand. I took him to

be in love; but it seems he was only meditating a work,—*The Life of Morland*. The young man is not used to composition.

Rickman and Captain Burney are well; they assemble at my house pretty regularly of a Wednesday—a new institution. Like other great men I have a public day, cribbage and pipes, with Phillips and noisy Martin.

Good Heaven! what a bit only I've got left! How shall I squeeze all I know into this morsel! Coleridge is come home, and is going to turn lecturer on Taste at the Royal Institution. I shall get £200 from the theatre if *Mr. H.* has a good run, and I hope £100 for the copyright. Nothing if it fails; and there never was a more ticklish thing. The whole depends on the manner in which the name is brought out, which I value myself on, as a *chef-d'œuvre*. How the paper grows less and less! In less than two minutes I shall cease to talk to you, and you may rave to the Great Wall of China.

N. B. Is there such a wall? Is it as big as Old London Wall by Bedlam? Have you met with a friend of mine, named Ball, at Canton?—if you are acquainted, remember me kindly to him. Amongst many queer cattle I have and do meet with at the India House, I always liked his behaviour. Tell him his friend Evans, &c., are well. Woodruff not dead yet. Maybe, you'll think I have not said enough of Tuthill and the Holcrofts. Tuthill is a noble fellow, as far as I can



judge. The Holcrofts bear their disappointment pretty well, but indeed they are sadly mortified. Mrs. H. is cast down. It was well, if it were but on this account, that Tuthill is come home.

N. B. If my little thing don't succeed, I shall easily survive, having, as it were, compared to H.'s venture, but a sixteenth in the lottery. Mary and I are to sit next the orchestra in the pit, next the tweedledees. She remembers you. You are more to us than five hundred farces, clappings, &c. Come back one day. C. LAMB

Tuthill is at Crabtree's, who has married Tuthill's sister.

#### CLXXIX.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

December 11, 1806.

Dear Wordsworth, — *Mr. H.* came out last night and failed. I had many fears; the subject was not substantial enough. John Bull must have solider fare than a *letter*. We are pretty stout about it, have had plenty of condoling friends; but, after all, we had rather it should have succeeded. You will see the prologue in most of the morning papers. It was received with such shouts as I never witness'd to a prologue. It was attempted to be encored. How hard! a thing I did merely as a task, because it was wanted, and set no great store by; and *Mr. H.!!*

The quantity of friends we had in the house,

my brother and I being in public offices, &c., was astonishing — but they yielded at length to a few hisses. A hundred hisses! Damn the word, I write it like kisses — how different! — a hundred hisses outweigh a thousand claps. The former come more directly from the heart. Well, 't is withdrawn and there is an end.

Better luck to us.

C. L.

P. S. Pray when any of you write to the Clarksons, give our kind loves, and say we shall not be able to come and see them at Xmas, as I shall have but a day or two, — and tell them we bear our mortification pretty well.

Mary's love to all of you — I would n't let her write.

#### NOTE

[*Mr. H.* was produced at Drury Lane on December 10, with Elliston in the title-rôle. The curious thing is that the management of Drury Lane advertised the farce as a success and announced it for the next night. But Lamb apparently interfered and it was not played again. Some few years later *Mr. H.* was performed acceptably in America. — E. V. LUCAS.]

#### CLXXX. — TO SARAH STODDART

December 11 [1806].

Dear Sarah, — Mary is a little cut at the ill success of *Mr. H.*, which came out last night and *failed*. I know you 'll be sorry, but never mind. We are determined not to be cast down. I am

going to leave off tobacco, and then we must thrive. A smoking man must write smoky farces.

Mary is pretty well, but I persuaded her to let me write. We did not apprise you of the coming out of *Mr. H.*, for fear of ill-luck. You were much better out of the house. If it had taken, your partaking of our good luck would have been one of our greatest joys. As it is, we shall expect you at the time you mentioned. But whenever you come you shall be most welcome.

God bless you, dear Sarah.

Yours most truly, C. L.

Mary is by no means unwell, but I made her let me write. Don't mind this being a queer letter. I am in haste, and taken up by visitors, condolers, &c. God bless you!

CLXXXI.—MARY LAMB TO MRS.  
CLARKSON

December 23, 1806.

My dear Mrs. Clarkson, — You are very kind to say you are out of humour with yourself for not writing before, but I beg you will never be so again. I know so well, and often feel so badly, how tiresome writing sometimes is, that I intreat you will never write but when you feel yourself quite inclined. I tried the morning after the failure of our little farce to write a line, — you know its ill success and how stoutly we meant to bear it, but I found myself utterly incapable of

writing one connected sentence, so stout was the philosophy I wished to boast of.

I do not love to throw the blame of the ill success of a piece upon the actors : it is a common trick with unsuccessful dramatists. The blame rested chiefly with Charles, and yet should not be called blame, for it was mere ignorance of stage effect ; and I am mistaken if he has not gained much useful knowledge, more than he could have learned from a constant attendance at the representations of other people's pieces, by seeing his own fail ; he seems perfectly aware why, and from what cause it failed. He intends to write one more with all his dear-bought experience in his head, and should that share the same fate, he will then turn his mind to some other pursuit.

I am happy to hear so good an account of your health ; go on improving as fast as you can, that I may find you quite well. At Easter, or a few weeks after, I hope to spend a delightful holiday with you at Bury ; if we come at Easter we cannot stay longer than one week ; if we defer our journey, we can make a much longer visit, but at present I know not how it will be settled, for my brother sometimes threatens to pass his holidays in town hunting over old plays at the Museum to extract passages for a work (a collection of poetry) Mr. Wordsworth intends to publish. However, I hope before that time arrives, he will be able to borrow the books of some good old

collector of those hidden treasures, and thus they can be copied at home and much of Charles' labour and time saved. The Museum is only open during his office hours. I am much pleased with your friend Henry Robinson. He has been truly kind and friendly about the farce. That disappointment is wearing out of our heads very fast. My brother means to keep at home very much this winter, and work very hard. When he is at work, he is always happier and in better health.

I am glad Miss Smith is with you, because Coleridge has told me she is the best good girl in the world.

I am pleased to hear again the name of your old neighbour Mr. Smith. I well remember him the first season of the *School for Scandal*; he was ("I being a young thing then") a prodigious favourite with me. I cannot for the life of me conceive of him as an old man. *O what actors there were then!* but as I said before, disappointed authors must not complain of actors (you shall see the piece when I can spare time to write a copy, or can spare the only one we have). No matter for the *brains* of your good townspeople. Go amongst them as much as you can: I am sure company is a certain cure for your malady.

I am glad to hear of my friend Tom's improvement: never mind his learning; that will come in due time. Indeed I have reasons for wishing him a little backward in that respect, for I have a little book I mean to send him; and the



printer has been so long bringing it out I began to fear Tom would attain so much knowledge as to outgrow the use thereof, and Tom's approbation of my first production was one of the things I built upon. I suppose I may send a parcel by the Bury stage? That is a foolish question to ask, for no doubt I may.

I rejoice to hear Mr. Clarkson has begun his history of the Abolition. May we not expect to see him now in a few days? How I wish he would bring you too!

We are to stay at home and work, as I forget it is Christmas; but we sincerely wish you a *merry* happy Christmas and many, many, happy, *healthy* new years. Charles' kindest respects to you and Mr. Clarkson and young Tom and Miss Buck. Is she not at Bury? I remain your affectionate friend,

M. LAMB

No news of Coleridge lately.

I shall rejoice to hear from you, whenever you feel writing quite pleasant to you. *Did you ever see such a queer scrawl as mine?*

#### CLXXXII. — TO WILLIAM GODWIN

? 1806.

I repent. Can that God whom thy votaries say that thou hast demolished expect more? I did indite a splenetic letter, but did the black hypochondria never gripe *thy* heart, till thou hast taken

a friend for an enemy? 'The foul fiend Flibbertigibbet leads me over four inched bridges, to course my own shadow for a traitor. There are certain positions of the moon, under which I counsel thee not to take anything written from this domicile as serious.

*I rank thee with Alves, — Latinè, Helvetius, — or any of his cursed crew? Thou art my friend, and henceforth my philosopher: thou shalt teach distinction to the junior branches of my household, and deception to the greyhaired janitress at my door.*

What! Are these atonements? Can Arcadians be brought upon knees, creeping and crouching?

Come, as Macbeth's drunken porter says, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock — seven times in a day shalt thou batter at my peace, and if I shut aught against thee, save the Temple of Janus, may Briareus, with his hundred hands, in each a brass knocker, lead me such a life.

C. LAMB

#### CLXXXIII.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

January 29, 1807.

Dear Wordsworth, — We have book'd off from Swan and Two Necks, Lad Lane, this day (per coach) the *Tales from Shakespear*. You will forgive the plates, when I tell you they were left to the direction of Godwin, who left the choice of subjects to the bad baby, who from mischief

(I suppose) has chosen one from damn'd beastly vulgarity (*vide Merch. Venice*) where no atom of authority was in the tale to justify it—to another has given a name which exists not in the tale, Nic Bottom, and which she thought would be funny, though in this I suspect *his* hand, for I guess her reading does not reach far enough to know Bottom's Christian name—and one of Hamlet, and grave-digging, a scene which is not hinted at in the story, and you might as well have put King Canute the Great reproving his courtiers—the rest are giants and giantesses. Suffice it, to save our taste and damn our folly, that we left it all to a friend, W. G., who in the first place cheated me into putting a name to them, which I did not mean, but do not repent, and then wrote a puff about their *simplicity*, &c., to go with the advertisement as in my name!

Enough of this egregious dupery. —I will try to extract the load of teasing circumstances from the stories and tell you that I am answerable for *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Timon*, *Romeo*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, for occasionally a tailpiece or correction of grammar, for none of the cuts and all of the spelling. The rest is my sister's. —We think *Pericles* of hers the best, and *Othello* of mine; but I hope all have some good. *As You Like It* we like least.

So much, only begging you to tear out the cuts and give them to Johnny, as “Mrs. Godwin's fancy.”

Our love *to all*.

C. L.

I had almost forgot, —

My part of the Preface begins in the middle of a sentence, in last but one page after a colon, thus, —

: — *which if they be happily so done, &c.*

The former part hath a more feminine turn and does hold me up something as an instructor to young ladies ; but upon my modesty's honour I wrote it not.

Godwin told my sister that the baby chose the subjects, — a fact in taste.

CLXXXIV.—TO MR. AND MRS.  
CLARKSON

June, 1807.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Clarkson, — You will wish to know how we performed our journey. My sister was tolerably quiet until we got to Chelmsford, where she began to be very bad indeed, as your friends William Knight and his family can tell you when you see them. What I should have done without their kindness I don't know, but among other acts of great attention, they provided me with a waistcoat to confine her arms, by the help of which we went through the rest of our journey. But sadly tired and miserably depressed she was before we arrived at Hoxton. We got there about half-past eight ; and now 't is all over, I have great satisfaction that she is among people who have been used to her. In all prob-

ability a few months or even weeks will restore her (her last illness confined her ten weeks), but if she does recover I shall be very careful how I take her so far from home again. I am so fatigued, for she talked in the most wretched desponding way conceivable, particularly the last three stages, she talked all the way, — so that you won't expect me to say much, or even to express myself as I should do in thanks for your kindnesses. My sister will acknowledge them when she can.

I shall not have heard how she is to-day until too late for the post ; but if any great change takes place for better or worse, I shall certainly let you know.

She tells me something about having given away one of my coats to your servant. It is a new one, and perhaps may be of small use to him. If you can get it me again, I shall very willingly give him a compensation. I shall also be much obliged by your sending in a parcel all the manuscripts, books, &c., she left behind. I want in particular the *Dramatic Extracts*, as my purpose is to make use of the remainder of my holidays in completing them at the British Museum, which will be employment and money in the end.

I am exceedingly harassed with the journey, but that will go off in a day or two, and I will set to work. I know you will grieve for us, but I hope my sister's illness is not worse than many



she has got through before. Only I am afraid the fatigue of the journey may affect her general health. You shall have notice how she goes on. In the meantime, accept our kindest thanks.

[*Signature cut off.*]

CLXXXV.—MARY LAMB TO SARAH  
STODDART

[Endorsed October, 1807.]

My dear Sarah,—I am two letters in your debt; but it has not been so much from idleness, as a wish first to see how your comical love affair would turn out. You know, I make a pretence not to interfere; but like all old maids I feel a mighty solicitude about the event of love stories. I learn from the Lover that he has not been so remiss in his duty as you supposed. His Effusion, and your complaints of his inconstancy, crossed each other on the road. He tells me his was a very strange letter, and that probably it has affronted you. That it was a strange letter I can readily believe; but that you were affronted by a strange letter is not so easy for me to conceive, that not being your way of taking things. But however it be, let some answer come, either to him, or else to me, showing cause why you do not answer him. And pray, by all means, preserve the said letter, that I may one day have the pleasure of seeing how Mr. Hazlitt treats of love.

I was at your brother's on Thursday. Mrs. S. tells me she has not written, because she does not like to put you to the expense of postage. They are very well. Little Missy thrives amazingly. Mrs. Stoddart conjectures she is in the family way again; and those kind of conjectures generally prove true. Your other sister-in-law, Mrs. Hazlitt, was brought to bed last week of a boy: so that you are likely to have plenty of nephews and nieces.

Yesterday evening we were at Rickman's; and who should we find there but Hazlitt; though, if you do not know it was his first invitation there, it will not surprise you as much as it did us. We were very much pleased, because we dearly love our friends to be respected by our friends.

The most remarkable events of the evening were, that we had a very fine pine-apple; that Mr. Phillips, Mr. Lamb, and Mr. Hazlitt played at cribbage in the most polite and gentlemanly manner possible — and that I won two rubbers at whist.

I am glad Aunty left you some business to do. Our compliments to her and your Mother. Is it as cold at Winterslow as it is here? How do the Lions go on? I am better, and Charles is tolerably well. Godwin's new Tragedy will probably be damned the latter end of next week. Charles has written the Prologue. Prologues and Epilogues will be his death. If you know the extent of Mrs. Reynolds' poverty, you will be glad

to hear Mr. Norris has got ten pounds a year for her from the Temple Society. She will be able to make out pretty well now.

Farewell—Determine as wisely as you can in regard to Hazlitt; and, if your determination is to have him, Heaven send you many happy years together. If I am not mistaken, I have concluded letters on the Corydon Courtship with this same wish. I hope it is not ominous of change; for if I were sure you would not be quite starved to death, nor beaten to a mummy, I should like to see Hazlitt and you come together, if (as Charles observes) it were only for the joke sake.

Write instantly to me.

Yours most affectionately,

M. LAMB

#### NOTE

[The Lover this time is, at last, William Hazlitt. Miss Stoddart was not his first love; some time before he had wished to marry a Miss Railton of Liverpool; then, in the Lakes, he had had passages with a farmer's daughter involving a ducking at the hands of jealous rivals; while De Quincey would have us believe that Hazlitt proposed to Dorothy Wordsworth. But it was Sarah Stoddart whom he was destined to marry. A specimen of Hazlitt's love letters (which Mary Lamb wished to see) will be found in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, Vol. I., page 153. The marriage turned out anything but a joke.

Mrs. Reynolds' poverty was in later years further relieved by an annuity of £30 from Charles Lamb. — E. V. LUCAS.]

[We now come to two curious letters from Charles Lamb to Joseph Hume. The first contains the beginning of an elaborate hoax maintained by Lamb and Hume, in which Hazlitt, although the victim, played his part.]

CLXXXVI.—TO JOSEPH HUME

December 29, 1807.

Alas, sir, I cannot be among you. My fate is still not to know on which side my bread is butter'd. I hang between two engagements perpetually, and the worst always comes first. The devil always takes care to clap in with a retainer when he sees God about to offer a fee — cold bones of mutton and leather-roasted potatoes at Pimlico at ten must carry it away from a certain turkey and a contingent plumb-pudding at Montpelier at four (I always spell plumb-pudding with a *b*, p-l-u-m-b — I think it reads fatter and more suety).

I suppose you know what has happen'd to our poor friend Hazlitt. If not, take it as I read it in the *Morning Post* or *Fashionable World* of this morning :

“Last night Mr. H., a portrait painter in Southampton Buildings, Holborn, put an end to his existence by cutting his throat in a shocking manner. It is supposed that he must have committed his purpose with a pallet-knife, as the edges of the cicatrice or wound were found besmeared with a yellow consistence, but the knife could

not be found. The reasons of this rash act are not assigned: an unfortunate passion has been mentioned; but nothing certain is known. The deceased was subject to hypochondria, low spirits, but he had lately seemed better, having paid more than usual attention to his dress and person. Besides being a painter, he had written some pretty things in prose and verse."

God bless me, ten o'clock! I have cut out the paragraph, and will shew it you entire. I have not time to transcribe more.

Yours,

C. LAMB

#### CLXXXVII. — TO JOSEPH HUME

January 12, 1808.

Dear Sir, — The strange rumours which have been spread about since the death of our respected friend, as well as some things which have come under my own observation, which I do not care to trust to the ordinary communication of a post, but reserve them for the especial confidence of your most valued ear in private, — these things, without much help from a rainy day or time of the year which usually disposes men to sadness, have contributed to make me not a little serious and thoughtful of late.

I have run over in my mind the various treatises which I have perused in the course of a studious, and, I hope, innocently employed life, on the nature of disembodied spirits and the causes



of their revisiting the earth. The fact I will take for granted ; presuming that I am not addressing an atheist. I find the most commonly assigned reason to be, *for the revealing of hidden treasures which the deceased had boarded up in his or her lifetime.*

Now though I cannot sufficiently admire the providence of God who by this means has oft-times restored great heaps of gold and silver to the circulation of the living, thereby sparing the iterately plowed and now almost effete wombs of Peru and Mexico, which would need another Sarah's miracle to replenish, yet in the particular case of the defunct I cannot but suspect some other cause, and not this, to have called him from his six-foot bed of earth. For it is highly improbable that he should have accumulated any such vast treasures, for the revealing of which a miracle was needed, without some suspicion of the fact among his friends during his lifetime. I for my part always looked upon our dear friend as a man rich rather in the gifts of his mind than in earthly treasures. He had few rents or comings-in, that I was ever aware of, small (if any) landed property, and by all that I could witness he subsisted more upon the well-timed contributions of a few chosen friends who knew his worth, than upon any estate which could properly be called his own. I myself have contributed my part. God knows, I speak not this in reproach. I have never taken, nor indeed did the deceased offer, any *writ-*

*ten acknowledgments* of the various sums which he has had of me, by which I could make the fact manifest to the legal eye of an executor or administrator. He was not a man to affect these niceties in his transactions with his friends. He would often say, money was nothing between intimate acquaintances, that golden streams had no ebb, that a purse mouth never regorged, that God loved a chearful giver but the devil hated a free taker, that a paid loan makes angels groan, with many such like sayings : he had always free and generous notions about money. His nearest friends know this best. Induced by these considerations I give up that commonly received notion of revealable treasures in our friend's case. Neither am I too forward to adopt that vulgar superstition of some hidden murder to be brought to light ; which yet I do not universally reject : for when I revolve, that the defunct was naturally of a discursible and communicative temper (though of a gloomy and close aspect, as born under Saturn), a great repeater of conversations which he generally carried away *verbatim* and would repeat with syllabic exactness in the next company where he was received (by which means I that have staid at home have often reaped the profit of his travels without stirring from my elbow-chair), I cannot think that if he had been present at so remarkable circumstance as a murder he would so soon have forgotten it as to make no mention of it at the next place where he dined or supt, or

that he could have restrained himself from giving the particulars of a matter of fact like that in his lifetime. I am sure I have often heard him dilate upon occurrences of a much less interesting sort than that in question. I am most inclined to support that opinion which favors the establishing of some speculative point in religion: a frequent cause, says Wierus, for spirits returning to the earth, to confute atheists, &c.

When I consider the education which our friend received from a venerable parent, his religious destination, his nurture at a seminary appropriated to young ministers; but whatever the cause of this reappearance may prove to be, we may now with truth assert that our deceased friend has attained to one object of his pursuits, one hour's separate existence gives a dead man clearer notions of metaphysics than all the treatises which in this state of carnal entanglement the least-immersed spirit can outspin. It is good to leave such subjects to that period when we shall have no heads to ache, no brains to distort, no faces to lengthen, no clothes to neglect. Had our dear friend attended to this, he might have shewn his airy form in courts and ball rooms, whispered the fair, ogled, sung, danced, and known just as much of those subjects as it is probable he ever knew previous to his death; for I always take it that a disposition to such sort of inquiries . . . and ends in lunacy and dirty linen. You have my opinions.

[*No signature.*]

CLXXXVIII. — TO THE REV. W. HAZLITT

Temple, February 18, 1808.

Sir, — I am truly concerned that any mistake of mine should have caused you uneasiness, but I hope we have got a clue to William's absence, which may clear up all apprehensions. The people where he lodges in town have received direction from him to forward one or two of his shirts to a place called Winterslow, in the county of Hants [Wilts] (not far from Salisbury), where the lady lives whose cottage, pictured upon a card, if you opened my letter you have doubtless seen, and though we have had no explanation of the mystery since, we shrewdly suspect that at the time of writing that letter which has given you all this trouble, a certain son of yours (who is both painter and author) was at her elbow, and did assist in framing that very cartoon which was sent to amuse and mislead us in town, as to the real place of his destination.

And some words at the back of the said cartoon, which we had not marked so narrowly before, by the similarity of the handwriting to William's, do very much confirm the suspicion. If our theory be right, they have had the pleasure of their jest, and I am afraid you have paid for it in anxiety. But I hope your uneasiness will now be removed, and you will pardon a suspense occasioned by *Love*, who does so many worse mischiefs every day. The letter to the people where William lodges

says, moreover, that he shall be in town in a fortnight.

My sister joins in respects to you and Mrs. Hazlitt, and in our kindest remembrances and wishes for the restoration of Peggy's health.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

CH. LAMB

CLXXXIX.—TO THOMAS MANNING

February 26, 1808.

Dear Missionary, — Your letters from the farthest ends of the world have arrived safe. Mary is very thankful for your remembrance of her, and with the less suspicion of mercenariness, as the silk, the *symbolum materiale* of your friendship, has not yet appeared. I think Horace says somewhere, "*nox longa.*" I would not impute negligence or unhandsome delays to a person whom you have honoured with your confidence; but I have not heard of the silk or of Mr. Knox save by your letter. Maybe he expects the first advances! or it may be that he has not succeeded in getting the article on shore, for it is among the *res prohibita* et non nisi *smuggle-ationis viâ fruetur*. But so it is, in the friendships between *wicked men*, the very expressions of their goodwill cannot but be sinful, — *splendida vitia* at best. Stay, while I remember it — Mrs. Holcroft was safely delivered of a girl some day in last week. Mother and child doing well. Mr. Holcroft



has been attack'd with severe rheumatism. They have moved to Clipstone Street. I suppose you know my farce was damned. The noise still rings in my ears. Was you ever in the pillory? — being damned is something like that.

Godwin keeps a shop in Skinner Street, Snow Hill, he is turned children's bookseller, and sells penny, twopenny, threepenny, and fourpenny books. Sometimes he gets an order for the dearer sort of books. (Mind, all that I tell you in this letter is true.)

A treaty of marriage is on foot between William Hazlitt and Miss Stoddart. Something about settlements only retards it. She has somewhere about £80 a year, to be £120 when her mother dies. He has no settlement except what he can claim from the parish. *Pauper est Cinna, sed amat.* The thing is therefore in abeyance. But there is love o' both sides. Little Fenwick (you don't see the connexion of ideas here, how the devil should you?) is in the rules of the Fleet. Cruel creditors! operation of iniquitous laws! is Magna Charta then a mockery?

Why, in general (here I suppose you to ask a question), my spirits are pretty good, but I have my depressions, black as a smith's beard, Vulcanic, Stygian. At such times I have recourse to a pipe, which is like not being at home to a dun; he comes again with tenfold bitterness the next day. (Mind, I am not in debt: I only borrow a similitude from others; it shows imagination.)

I have done two books since the failure of my farce; they will both be out this summer. The one is a juvenile book, *The Adventures of Ulysses*, intended to be an introduction to the reading of *Telemachus*! It is done out of the *Odyssey*, not from the Greek: I would not mislead you; nor yet from Pope's *Odyssey*, but from an older translation of one Chapman. The *Shakespear Tales* suggested the doing it. Godwin is in both those cases my bookseller. The other is done for Longman, and is *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets contemporary with Shakespear*. Specimens are becoming fashionable. We have: *Specimens of Ancient English Poets*, *Specimens of Modern English Poets*, *Specimens of Ancient English Prose Writers*, without end. They used to be called Beauties. You have seen *Beauties of Shakespear*? so have many people that never saw any beauties in Shakespear. Longman is to print it, and be at all the expense and risk; and I am to share the profits after all deductions; *i. e.*, a year or two hence I must pocket what they please to tell me is due to me. But the book is such as I am glad there should be. It is done out of old plays at the Museum and out of Dodsley's collection, &c. It is to have notes.

So I go creeping on since I was lamed with that cursed fall from off the top of Drury-Lane Theatre into the pit, something more than a year ago. However, I have been free of the house ever since, and the house was pretty free with me

upon that occasion. Damn 'em, how they hissed ! It was not a hiss neither, but a sort of a frantic yell, like a congregation of mad geese, with roaring something like bears, mows and mops like apes, sometimes snakes, that hiss'd me into madness. 'T was like St. Anthony's temptations.

Mercy on us, that God should give his favourite children, men, mouths to speak with, to discourse rationally, to promise smoothly, to flatter agreeably, to encourage warmly, to counsel wisely : to sing with, to drink with, and to kiss with : and that they should turn them into mouths of adders, bears, wolves, hyenas, and whistle like tempests, and emit breath through them like distillations of aspic poison, to asperse and vilify the innocent labours of their fellow-creatures who are desirous to please them ! God be pleased to make the breath stink and the teeth rot out of them all therefor ! Make them a reproach, and all that pass by them to loll out their tongue at them ! Blind mouths ! as Milton somewhere calls them. Do you like Braham's singing ? The little Jew has bewitched me. I follow him like as the boys followed Tom the Piper. He cured me of melancholy, as David cured Saul ; but I don't throw stones at him, as Saul did at David in payment. I was insensible to music till he gave me a new sense.

O, that you could go to the new opera of *Kais* to-night ! 'T is all about Eastern manners ; it would just suit you. It describes the wild Arabs,

wandering Egyptians, lying dervishes, and all that sort of people, to a hair. You need n't ha' gone so far to see what you see, if you saw it as I do every night at Drury-Lane Theatre. Braham's singing, when it is impassioned, is finer than Mrs. Siddons's or Mr. Kemble's acting; and when it is not impassioned, it is as good as hearing a person of fine sense talking. The brave little Jew! Old Sergeant Hill is dead. Mrs. Rickman is in the family way. It is thought that Hazlitt will have children, if he marries Miss Stoddart. I made a pun the other day, and palmed it upon Holcroft, who grinned like a Cheshire cat. (Why do cats grin in Cheshire? — Because it was once a county palatine, and the cats cannot help laughing whenever they think of it, though I see no great joke in it.) I said that Holcroft said, being asked who were the best dramatic writers of the day, "HOOK AND I." Mr. Hook is author of several pieces, *Tekeli*, &c. You know what *books and eyes* are, don't you? They are what little boys do up their breeches with.

Your letter had many things in it hard to be understood: the puns were ready and Swift-like; but don't you begin to be melancholy in the midst of Eastern customs! "The mind does not easily conform to foreign usages, even in trifles: it requires something that it has been familiar with." That begins one of Dr. Hawkesworth's papers in the *Adventurer*, and is, I think, as sensible a remark as ever fell from the Doctor's

mouth. Do you know Watford in Hertfordshire? It is a pretty village. Louisa goes to school there. They say the governess is a very intelligent, managing person, takes care of the morals of the pupils, teaches them something beyond exteriors. Poor Mrs. Beaumont! Rickman's aunt, she might have been a governess (as both her nieces are) if she had any ability or any education, but I never thought she was good for anything; she is dead and so is her nephew. He was shot in half at Monte Video, that is, not exactly in half, but as you have seen a three-quarter picture. Stoddart is in England. White is at Christ's Hospital, a wit of the first magnitude, but had rather be thought a gentleman, like Congreve. You know Congreve's repulse which he gave to Voltaire, when he came to visit him as a *literary man*, that he wished to be considered only in the light of a private gentleman. I think the impertinent Frenchman was properly answered. I should just serve any member of the French Institute in the same manner, that wished to be introduced to me. Bonaparte has voted 5,000 livres to Davy, the great young English chemist; but it has not arrived. Coleridge has delivered two lectures at the Royal Institution; two more were attended, but he did not come. It is thought he has gone sick upon them. He a'n't well, that's certain. Wordsworth is coming to see him. He sits up in a two pair of stairs room at the *Courier* office, and receives visitors



on his close stool. How is Mr. Ball? He has sent for a prospectus of the London Library.

Does any one read at Canton? Lord Moira is President of the Westminster Library. I suppose you might have interest with Sir Joseph Banks to get to be president of any similar institution that should be set up at Canton. I think public reading-rooms the best mode of educating young men. Solitary reading is apt to give the headache. Besides, who knows that you *do* read? There are ten thousand institutions similar to the Royal Institution, which have sprung up from it. There is the London Institution, the Southwark Institution, the Russell Square Rooms Institution, &c. — *College quasi Con-lege*, a place where people read together. Wordsworth, the great poet, is coming to town; he is to have apartments in the Mansion House. He says he does not see much difficulty in writing like Shakspeare, if he had a mind to try it. It is clear, then, nothing is wanting but the mind. Even Coleridge a little checked at this hardihood of assertion.

Jones, of Trinity, I suppose you know he is dead. Dyer came to me the other evening at eleven o'clock, when there was a large room full of company, which I usually get together on a Wednesday evening (all great men have public days), to propose to me to have my face done by a Miss Beetham (or Betham), a miniature painter, some relation to Mrs. Beetham the profilist or pattern mangle woman opposite to St. Dunstan's,

to put before my book of Extracts. I declined it.

Well, my dear Manning, talking cannot be infinite; I have said all I have to say; the rest is but remembrances, which we shall bear in our heads of you, while we have heads. Here is a packet of trifles nothing worth: but it is a trifling part of the world where I live; emptiness abounds. But, in fulness of affection, we remain yours,

C. L.

### CXC.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

March 11, 1808.

Dear Godwin, — The giant's vomit was perfectly nauseous, and I am glad you pointed it out. I have removed the objection. To the other passages I can find no other objection but what you may bring to numberless passages besides, such as of Scylla snatching up the six men, &c., that is to say, they are lively images of *shocking* things. If you want a book, which is not occasionally to *shock*, you should not have thought of a tale which was so full of anthropophagi and wonders. I cannot alter these things without enervating the book, and I will not alter them if the penalty should be that you and all the London booksellers should refuse it. But speaking as author to author, I must say that I think *the terrible* in those two passages seems to me so much to preponderate over the nauseous, as to make them

rather fine than disgusting. Who is to read them I don't know: who is it that reads *Tales of Terror* and *Mysteries of Udolpho*? Such things sell. I only say that I will not consent to alter such passages, which I know to be some of the best in the book.

As an author I say to you an author, "Touch not my work." As to a bookseller I say, "Take the work such as it is, or refuse it." You are as free to refuse it as when we first talked of it. As to a friend I say, "Don't plague yourself and me with nonsensical objections." I assure you I will not alter one more word.

CXCI.—TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

March 12, 1808.

Dear Sir,—Wordsworth breakfasts with me on Tuesday morning next; he goes to Mrs. Clarkson the next day, and will be glad to meet you before he goes. Can you come to us before nine or at nine that morning? I am afraid, *W.* is so engaged with Coleridge, who is ill, we cannot have him in an evening. If I do not hear from you, I will expect you to breakfast on Tuesday.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

NOTE

[This is the first letter to Henry Crabb Robinson (1775–1867), whom Lamb was destined to know very intimately,

and to whose *Diary* we are indebted for much of our information concerning the Lambs. We shall see much more of him. He knew Lamb well enough to accompany him, his sister, and Hazlitt to *Mr. H.* in December, 1806. — E. V. LUCAS.]

## CXCII.—TO GEORGE DYER

From my desk in Leadenhall Street,  
December 5, 1808.

Dear Dyer, — Coleridge is not so bad as your fears have represented him ; it is true that he is Bury'd, although he is not dead : to understand this quibble, you must know that he is at Bury St. Edmund's, relaxing, after the fatigues of lecturing and Londonizing. The little Rickmaness, whom you inquire after so kindly, thrives and grows apace ; she is already a prattler, and 't is thought that on some future day she may be a speaker ! We hold our weekly meetings still at No. 16, where, although we are not so high as the top of Malvern, we are involved in almost as much mist. Miss B.'s merit, "in every point of view," I am not disposed to question, although I have not been indulged with any view of that lady, back, side, or front — fie ! Dyer, to praise a female in such common market phrases, — you, who are held so courtly and so attentive. My book is not yet out, that is, not my *Extracts*, my *Ulysses* is, and waits your acceptance.

When you shall come to town, I hope to present you both together, never thinking of buying

the *Extracts* — half-a-guinea books were never calculated for my friends. More poets have started up since your departure ; William Hazlitt, your friend and mine, is putting to press a collection of verses, chiefly amatory, some of them pretty enough. How these painters encroach on our province ! There 's Hopner, Shee, Westall, and I don't know who besides, and Tresham. It seems, on confession, that they are not at the top of their own art, when they seek to eke out their fame with the assistance of another's ; no large tea-dealer sells cheeses, no great silversmith deals in razor-straps: it is only your petty dealers who mix commodities. If Nero had been a great emperor he would never have played the violoncello !

Who ever caught you, Dyer, designing a landscape or taking a likeness ? I have no more to add, who am the friend of virtue, poetry, and painting, therefore, in an especial manner,

Unalterably thine,

C. LAMB

CXCIII. — TO MRS. HAZLITT

December 10, 1808.

There came this morning a printed prospectus from "S. T. Coleridge, Grasmere," of a weekly paper, to be called *The Friend* ; a flaming prospectus, — I have no time to give the heads of it, — to commence the first Saturday in January. There came also notice of a turkey from Mr. Clarkson,



which I am more sanguine in expecting the accomplishment of than I am of Coleridge's prophecy.

C. LAMB

NOTE

[The above letter is a postscript which was added by Lamb to a letter written by his sister Mary to Mrs. Hazlitt. The portion written by Mary Lamb has not been printed, but the entire letter appears in facsimile in the first (folio) volume of this edition.]

CXCIV. — MARY AND CHARLES LAMB  
TO MRS. CLARKSON

December 10, 1808.

My dear Mrs. Clarkson, — I feel myself greatly indebted to Mr. Clarkson for his care about our direction, since it has procured us the pleasure of a line from you. Why are we all, my dear friend, so unwilling to sit down and write a letter when we all so well know the great satisfaction it is to hear of the welfare of an absent friend? I began to think that you and all I connect in my mind with you were gone from us forever. Coleridge in a manner gave us up when he was in town, and we have now lost all traces of him. At the time he was in town I received two letters from Miss Wordsworth, which I never answered because I would not complain to her of our old friend. As this has never been explained to her it must seem very strange, more particularly so,

as Miss Hutchinson and Mrs. Wordsworth were in an ill state of health at the time. Will you some day soon write a few words just to tell me how they all are and all you know concerning them?

Do not imagine that I am now *complaining* to you of Coleridge. Perhaps we are both in fault, we expect *too much*, and he gives *too little*. We ought many years ago to have understood each other better. Nor is it quite all over with us yet, for he will some day or other come in with the same old face, and receive (after a few spiteful words from me) the same warm welcome as ever. But we could not submit to sit as hearers at his lectures and not be permitted to see our old friend when *school-hours* were over. I beg you will not let what I have said give you a moment's thought, and pray do not mention it to the Wordsworths nor to Coleridge, for I know he thinks I am apt to speak unkindly of him. I am not good-tempered, and I have two or three times given him proofs that I am not.

You say you are all in your "better way," which is a very chearful hearing, for I trust you mean to include that your health is *bettering* too. I look forward with great pleasure to the near approach of Christmas and Mr. Clarkson.

And now the turkey you are so kind as to promise us comes into my head and tells me it is so very near that if writing before then should happen to be the least irksome to you, I will be con-

tent to wait for intelligence of our old friends till I have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Clarkson in town. I ought to say this because I know at times how dreadfully irksome writing a letter is to me, even when I have no reason in the world to give why it is so, and I remember I have heard you express something of the same kind of feelings.

I try to remember something to inquire after at Bury, — the lady we visited, the cherry tree Tom and I robbed, Tom my partner in the robbery (Mr. Thomas C—— I suppose now), and your cook maid that was so kind to me, are all at present I can recollect. Of all the places I ever saw Bury has made the liveliest impression on my memory. I have a very indistinct recollection of the lakes.

Charles joins with me in affectionate remembrances to you all, and he is more warm in his expressions of gratitude for the turkey because he is fonder of good eating than I am, though I am not amiss in that way.

God bless you, my kind friends!

I remain yours affectionately,

M. LAMB

Excuse this slovenly letter, if I were to write it over again I should abridge it one-half.

[*Charles Lamb adds:*]

We have this moment received a very chearful letter from Coleridge, who is now at Grasmere.

It contains a prospectus for a new weekly publication to be called *The Friend*. He says they are well there, and in good spirits, and that he has not been so well for a long time.

The prospectus is of a weekly paper of a miscellaneous nature to be call'd *The Friend* and to come out, the first number, the first Saturday in January. Those who remember *The Watchman* will not be very sanguine in expecting a regular fulfilment of this prophecy. But C. writes in delightful spirits, and *if ever*, he may *now* do this thing. I suppose he will send you a prospectus. I had some thought of inclosing mine. But I want to shew it about. My kindest remembrances to Mr. C., and thanks for the turkey.

C. LAMB

#### CXCV.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

February 25, 1809.

Dear Robert, — A great gap has been filled up since our intercourse was broken off. We shall at least have some things to talk over, when we meet. That you should never have been in London since I saw you last is a fact which I cannot account for on the principles of my own mental formation. You are worthy to be mentioned with Claudian's *Old Man of Verona*. I forbear to ask you any questions concerning your family, *who* are dead, and *who* married; I will not anticipate our meeting. I have been in total

darkness respecting you all these years. I am just up, and I have heard, without being able to confirm the fact, that Drury Lane Theatre is burnt to the ground. Of Walton's *Angler* a new edition is just published with the original plates revived. I think of buying it. The old editions are two guineas, and two guineas and a half. I have not forgotten our ride from Saffron Waldon and the madness of young parson Thomson of Cambridge that I took your brother to see. He is gone as a missionary to the East.

I live at present at number 16 Mitre Court Buildings, Inner Temple. I shall move at lady-day, or a little later : if you don't find me in M. C. B. I shall be at No. 2 or 4 Inner Temple Lane, — at either of which places I shall be happy to shake my old friend Robert by the hand.

C. L.

#### CXCVI.—TO THOMAS MANNING

March 28, 1809.

Dear Manning, — I sent you a long letter by the ships which sailed the beginning of last month, accompanied with books, &c. Since I last wrote, Holcroft is dead. He died on Thursday last and is not yet buried. He has been opened by Carlisle, and his heart was found completely ossified. He has had a long and severe illness. He seemed very willing to live, and to the last acted on his favorite principle of the power of the will to



overcome disease. I believe his strong faith in that power kept him alive long after another person would have given up. The physicians all concurred in positively saying he would not live a week, many weeks before he died. The family are as well as could be expected. I told you something about Mrs. Holcroft's plans. Since his death there has been a meeting of his friends and a subscription has been mentioned. I have no doubt that she will be set a-going, and that she will be fully competent to the scheme which she proposes. Fanny bears it much better than I could have supposed.

So there is one of your friends whom you will never see again! Perhaps the next fleet may bring you a letter from Martin Burney, to say that he writes by desire of Miss Lamb, who is not well enough to write herself, to inform you that her brother died on Thursday last, 14th June, &c. But I hope *not*. I should be sorry to give occasion to open a correspondence between Martin and you.

This letter must be short, for I have driven it off to the very moment of doing up the packets; and besides, that which I refer to above is a very long one; and if you have received my books, you will have enough to do to read them. While I think on it, let me tell you we are moved. Don't come any more to Mitre Court Buildings. We are at 34 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, and shall be here till about the end of



May: then we re-move to No. 2 Inner Temple Lane, where I mean to live and die; for I have such horror of moving, that I would not take a benefice from the King, if I was not indulged with non-residence. What a dislocation of com-

fort is comprised in that word moving ! Such a heap of little nasty things, after you think all is got into the cart: old drudging-boxes, worn-out brushes, gallipots, vials, things that it is impossible the most necessitous person can ever want, but which the women, who preside on these occasions, will not leave behind if it was to save your soul ; they 'd keep the cart ten minutes to stow in dirty pipes and broken matches, to show their economy. Then you can find nothing you want for many days after you get into your new lodgings. You must comb your hair with your fingers, wash your hands without soap, go about in dirty gaiters. Was I Diogenes, I would not move out of a kilderkin into a hogshead, though the first had had nothing but small beer in it, and the second reeked claret. Our place of final destination — I don't mean the grave, but No. 2 Inner Temple Lane — looks out upon a gloomy churchyard-like court, called Hare Court, with three trees and a pump in it. Do you know it? I was born near it, and used to drink at that pump when I was a Rechabite of six years old.

If you see newspapers you will read about Mrs. Clarke. The sensation in London about this nonsensical business is marvellous. I remember nothing in my life like it. Thousands of ballads, caricatures, lives, of Mrs. Clarke, in every blind alley. Yet in the midst of this stir, a sublime abstracted dancing-master, who attends a family we know in Kensington, being asked a question about



the progress of the examination in the House, inquired who Mrs. Clarke was? He had heard nothing of it. He had evaded this omnipresence by utter insignificance! The Duke should make that man his confidential valet. I proposed lock-

ing him up, barring him the use of his fiddle and red pumps, until he had minutely perused and committed to memory the whole body of the examinations, which employed the House of Commons a fortnight, to teach him to be more attentive to what concerns the public. I think I told you of Godwin's little book, and of Coleridge's prospectus, in my last; if I did not, remind me of it, and I will send you them, or an account of them, next fleet. I have no conveniency of doing it by this. Mrs. — grows every day in disfavour with God and man. I will be buried with this inscription over me: "Here lies C. L., the Woman-hater"—I mean that hated ONE WOMAN: for the rest, God bless them, and when he makes any more, make 'em prettier. How do you like the Mandarinesses? Are you on some little footing with any of them? This is Wednesday. On Wednesdays is my levee. The Captain, Martin, Phillips (not the Sheriff), Rickman, and some more, are constant attendants, besides stray visitors. We play at whist, eat cold meat and hot potatoes, and any gentleman that chuses smokes. Why do you never drop in? You 'll come some day, won't you?

C. LAMB, &c.

#### NOTE

[Mitre Court Buildings, Southampton Buildings, and Inner Temple Lane (Lamb's homes) have all been rebuilt since Lamb's day.]



CXCVII.—TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[Dated by H. C. R.: May, 1809.]

Dear Sir,— Would you be so kind as, when you go to the *Times* office, to see about an advertisement which my landlady's daughter left for insertion about ten days since, and has not appeared, for a Governess's Place? The references are to Thorpe & Graves, 18 Lower Holborn, and to M. B., 115 Oxford Street. Though not anxious about attitudes, she pines for a situation. I got home tolerably well, as I hear, the other evening. It may be a warning to any one in future to ask me to a dinner party. I always disgrace myself. I floated upstairs on the coachman's back, like Ariel,—

“ On a bat's back I do fly,  
After sunset merrily.”

In sobriety, I am, yours truly,

C. LAMB

CXCVIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE<sup>1</sup>

June 7, 1809.

Dear Coleridge,— I congratulate you on the appearance of *The Friend*. Your first number promises well, and I have no doubt the succeeding numbers will fulfil the promise. I had a kind letter from you some time since, which I

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter appears, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.

have left unanswered. I am also obliged to you, I believe, for a review in the *Annual*, am I not? The *Monthly Review* sneers at me, and asks "if *Comus* is not *good enough* for Mr. Lamb?" because I have said no good serious dramas have been written since the death of Charles the First, except *Samson Agonistes*. So because they do not know, or won't remember, that *Comus* was written long before, I am to be set down as an undervaluer of Milton! O Coleridge, do kill those reviews, or they will kill us — kill all we like! Be a friend to all else, but their foe.

I have been turned out of my chambers in the Temple by a landlord who wanted them for himself; but I have got other at No. 2, Inner Temple Lane, far more commodious and roomy. I have two rooms on third floor and five rooms above, with an inner staircase to myself, and all new painted, &c., and all for £30 a year! I came into them on Saturday week; and on Monday following, Mary was taken ill with fatigue of moving, and affected, I believe, by the novelty of the home; she could not sleep, and I am left alone with a maid quite a stranger to me, and she has a month or two's sad distraction to go through. What sad large pieces it cuts out of life — out of her life, who is getting rather old; and we may not have many years to live together! I am weaker, and bear it worse than I ever did. But I hope we shall be comfortable by and bye. The rooms are delicious,

and the best look backwards into Hare Court where there is a pump always going. Just now it is dry. Hare Court trees come in at the window, [so] that it's like living in a garden. I try to persuade myself it is much pleasanter than Mitre Court ; but, alas ! the household gods are slow to come in a new mansion. They are in their infancy to me ; I do not feel them yet ; no hearth has blazed to them yet. How I hate and dread new places !

I was very glad to see W[ordsworth]'s book advertised ; I am to have it to-morrow lent me, and if W[ordsworth] don't send me an order for one upon Longman, I will buy it. It is greatly extolled and liked by all who have seen it. Let me hear from some of you, for I am desolate. I shall have to send you, in a week or two, two volumes of *Juvenile Poetry*, done by Mary and me within the last six months, and that tale in prose which Wordsworth so much liked, which was published at Xmas, with nine others, by us, and has reached a second edition. There's for you ! We have almost worked ourselves out of child's work, and I don't know what to do. Sometimes I think of a drama, but I have no head for play-making ; I can do the dialogue, and that's all. I am quite aground for a Plan, and I must do something for money. Not that I have immediate wants, but I have prospective ones. O money, money, how blindly thou hast been worshipped, and how stupidly abused !

Thou art health, and liberty, and strength; and he that has thee may rattle his pockets at the foul fiend! Nevertheless, do not understand by this that I have not quite enough for my occasions for a year or two to come.

While I think on it, Coleridge, I fetch'd away my books which you had at the *Courier* office, and found all but a third volume of the old plays, containing *The White Devil*, Green's *Tu Quoque*, [and the] *Honest Whore*, — perhaps the most valuable volume of them all — *that* I could not find. Pray, if you can, remember what you did with it, or where you took it out with you a-walking perhaps; send me word; for, to use the old plea, it spoils a set. I found two other volumes (you had three), the *Arcadia*, and *Daniel*, enriched with MSS. notes. I wish every book I have were so noted. They have thoroughly converted me to relish *Daniel*, or to say I relish him, for, after all, I believe I did relish him. You well call him sober-minded. Your notes are excellent. Perhaps you've forgot them. I have read a review in the *Quarterly*, by Southey, on the *Missionaries*, which is most masterly. I only grudge it being there. It is quite beautiful. Do remember my Dodsley; and pray do write, or let some of you write. Clarkson tells me you are in a smoky house. Have you cured it? It is hard to cure anything of smoking. Our little poems are but humble, but they have no name. You must read them,

remembering they were task-work ; and perhaps you will admire the number of subjects, all of children, picked out by an old bachelor and an old maid. Many parents would not have found so many.

Have you read *Cælebs*? which has reached eight editions in so many weeks ; yet literally it is one of the very poorest sort of common novels, with the drawback of dull religion in it. Had the religion been high and flavoured, it would have been something. I borrowed this *Cælebs in Search of a Wife* of a very careful, neat lady, and returned it with this stuff written in the beginning, —

If ever I marry a wife  
I'd marry a landlord's daughter,  
For then I may sit in the bar,  
And drink cold Brandy-and-Water.

I don't expect you can find time from your *Friend* to write to me much, but write something, for there has been a long silence. You know Holcroft is dead. Godwin is well. He has written a very pretty, absurd book about sepulchres. He was affronted because I told him it was better than Harvey, but not so good as Sir T. Browne. This letter is all about Books ; but my head aches, and I hardly know what I write ; but I could not let *The Friend* pass without a congratulatory epistle. I won't criticise till it comes to a volume. Tell me how I shall send my packet to you? — by what conveyance? — by Longman, Short-man, or how? Give my



kindest remembrances to the Wordsworths. Tell him he must give me a book. My kind love to Mrs. W. and to Dorothy separately and conjointly. I wish you could all come and see me in my new rooms.

God bless you all.

C. L.

CXCIX.—TO CHARLES LLOYD, SR.

June 13, 1809.

Dear Sir, — I received with great pleasure the mark of your remembrance which you were pleased to send me, the translation from Homer [*Iliad*, xxiv]. You desire my opinion of it. I think it is plainer and more to the purpose than Pope's, though it may want some of his splendour and some of his sound. Yet I do not remember in any part of his translation a series of more manly versification than the conference of Priam with Hermes in your translation (lines 499 to 530), or than that part of the reply of Achilles to Priam, beginning with the fable of the Two Urns (in page 24); or than the Story of Niobe which follows a little after. I do not retain enough of my Greek (to my shame I say it) to venture at an opinion of the correctness of your version. What I seem to miss, and what certainly everybody misses in Pope, is a certain savage-like plainness of speaking in Achilles — a sort of indelicacy — the heroes in Homer are not half

civilized, they utter all the cruel, all the selfish, all the *mean thoughts* even of their nature, which it is the fashion of our great men to keep in. I cannot, in lack of Greek, point to any one place — but I remember the general feature as I read him at school. But your principles and turn of mind would, I have no doubt, lead you to *civilize* his phrases, and sometimes to *half christen* them.

I have marked a few verbal slips, the doing of which cannot be called criticism, or it is as if a reviewer being taken ill, his printer's compositor or reader were called to supply his place.

Lines 243, 244, 245 are the flattest lines in the whole:

But now *be open*, and *declare thy mind*,  
For I *confess I feel myself inclined*,  
*Indeed impell'd* by Jove's command to go,  
And face the man the cause of all our woe —

is the cool language of a man and his wife upon ordinary occurrences over a peaceable fireside — not the waverings of a divinely-impelled, humanly-shrinking, Priam striving to bolster up his own half-doubting inspirations by infusing a courage which he does not feel into the aged partner of his throne, that she may give it back to him. I should not have exprest myself thus petulantly, if there were many more, or indeed any more such lines in the translation, but they stopt the current of my feeling in the place, and I hope you will pardon my expressions.

[Lamb comments on παιδοφόνοιο in the line (506) ἀνδρὸς παιδοφόνοιο ποτὶ στόμα χεῖρ' ὀρέγεσθαι:]

I don't know Homer's word, not having my books about me, but surely in English, Priam would have said the *slayer* of my *son*, not call'd Achilles *murderer*, at such a time. That is rather too plain for the homely-speaking Homeric heroes.

[Again, Mr. Lloyd had translated τύμβον in the line (666) ἐνδεκάτῃ δέ κε τύμβον ἐπ' αὐτῷ ποιήσασθαι, and σῆμα in lines 799 and 801 'tumulus':]

Tumulus is too much like *making Homer talk Latin*. Tumulus is always spoken by an English mouth with a consciousness of *scientific attainment*. Priam and his people were no scholars — plain downright fighting men.

[Of the use of the word 'minstrels' for αἰδοῦς (singers) in the line (720) τρητοῖς ἐν λεχέεσσιν ἦσαν, παρὰ, δ' εἶσαν αἰδοῦς, Lamb said :]

Minstrels, I suspect to be a word bringing merely English or English ballad feeling to the mind. It expresses the thing and something more, as to say Sarpedon was a gentleman, or as somebody translated Paul's address "Ye men of Athens," "Gentlemen of Athens."

I am sure I ought to make many apologies for the freedom I have taken, but it will at least convince you that I have read the book — which I have twice, and the last time with more pleasure, because more at leisure. I wish you joy of

an amusement which I somehow seem to have done with. Excepting some things for children, I have scarce chimed ten couplets in the last as many years.

Be pleased to give my most kind remembrances to Mrs. Lloyd; and please to tell Robert that my sister is getting well, and I hope will soon be able to take pleasure in his affectionate epistle. My love also to Charles, when you write.

I am, Sir, with the greatest [the last few words, including signature, have been cut away.]

Robert will have told you how pleased I was with your truly Horatian Epistle in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

CC.—TO CHARLES LLOYD, SR.

June 19, 1809.

Dear Sir,— I can only say that I shall be most happy to see anything that you can send me at any time that has reference to your newly taken up pursuits. I will faithfully return the manuscript with such observations as a mere acquaintance with English, and with English poetry, may suggest. I dare not dictate in Greek. I am *Homo unius linguae*—your vindication of the lines which I had objected to makes me ashamed of the unimportance of my remarks: they were not worth confuting. Only on Line 33, Page 4, I still retain my opinion that it should be ‘were made.’

All seem'd to wish that such attempt were made,<sup>1</sup>  
Save Juno, Neptune, and the blue-ey'd maid.

I am glad to see you venture *made* and *maid* for rhymes. 'T is true their sound is the same. But the mind occupied in revolving the different meaning of two words so literally the same, is diverted from the objection which the mere ear would make, and to the mind it is rhyme enough. I had not noticed it till this moment of transcribing the couplet. A timidity of rhyming, whether of bringing together sounds too near, or too remote to each other, is a fault of the present day. The old English poets were richer in their diction, as they were less scrupulous. I shall expect your MS. with curiosity.

I am, Sir,

Yours with great respect,

C. LAMB

My kind remembrances to Robert. I shall soon have a little parcel to send him. I am very sorry to hear of the ill-health of Sophia.

CCI.—TO CHARLES LLOYD, SR.

July 31, 1809.

Dear Sir, — The general impression made by your translation on the mind of my friend who kept your MS. so unreasonably long, as well as on another friend who read over a good part of

[<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lloyd had written 'be made.']



it with me, was that it gave a great deal more of the sense of Homer than either of his two great modern translators have done. In several expressions which they at first objected to, on turning to the Greek they found it completely warranted you in the use of them; and they were even surprised that you could combine so much fidelity with so much of the turn of the best modern improvements in the couplet versification. I think of the two, I rather prefer the book of the *Iliad* which you sent me, for the sound of the verse; but the difference of subject almost involuntarily modifies verse. I find Cowper is a favourite with nobody. His injudicious use of the stately slow Miltonic verse in a subject so very different has given a distaste. Nothing can be more unlike to my fancy than Homer and Milton. Homer is perfect prattle, tho' exquisite prattle, compared to the deep oracular voice of Milton. In Milton you love to stop, and saturate your mind with every great image or sentiment; in Homer you want to go on, to have more of his agreeable narrative. Cowper delays you as much, walking over a Bowling Green, as the other does, travelling over steep Alpine heights, where the labour enters into and makes a part of the pleasure. From what I have seen, I would certainly be glad to hear that you continued your employment quite through the poem: that is, for an agreeable and honourable recreation to yourself; though

I should scarce think that (Pope having got the ground) a translation in Pope's couplet versification would ever supersede his to the public, however faithfuller or in some respects better. Pitt's *Virgil* is not much read, I believe, though nearer to the original than Dryden's. Perhaps it is, that people do not like two Homers or Virgils; there is a sort of confusion in it to an English reader, who has not a centre of reference in the original: when Tate and Brady's *Psalms* came out in our churches, many pious people would not substitute them in the room of David's, as they call'd Sternhold and Hopkins's. But if you write for a relaxation from other sort of occupations I can only congratulate you, Sir, on the noble choice, as it seems to me, which you have made, and express my wonder at the facility which you suddenly have arrived at, if (as I suspect) these are indeed the first specimens of this sort which you have produced. But I cannot help thinking that you betray a more practised gait than a late beginner could so soon acquire. Perhaps you have only resumed what you had formerly laid aside as interrupting more necessary avocations.

I need not add how happy I shall be to see at any time what you may please to send me. In particular, I should be glad to see that you had taken up Horace, which I think you enter into as much as any man that was not born in his days, and in the *Via Longa* or *Flaminia*, or near the *Forum*.

With many apologies for keeping your MS. so long, which my friend's engagements in business must excuse, I remain, Dear Sir, yours truly,  
C. L.

My kind respects to Mrs. Ll., and my remembrances to Robert, &c. &c.

CCII.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

1809.

Dear Robert, — Make my apologies to your father for not returning his *Odyssey* sooner, but I lent it to a friend who is a better Grecian than me, to make remarks on, and he has been so busied (he is a Doctor of Laws) that I have rescued the MSS. from him at last by force. He has written a few observations. I send you our poems. All mine are marked ✓ in the contents. The rest are Mary's, all but the *Beggar Man*, which is my brother's. The farce is not at home, but you shall have it ere long.

What follows is for your father to see.  
Mary desires her remembrances.

CCIII.—TO CHARLES LLOYD, SR.

1809.

Dear Sir, — A friend who has kept your MS. unreasonably long has ventured a few remarks on the first book. And I have twice read thro' both

with care, and can only reprehend a few trifling expressions with my scanty knowledge of Greek. I thank you for the reading of them, and assure you they read to me beautifully simple and in the manner of the original as far as I understand it.

Yours truly, C. L.

My kindest respects to Mrs. Lloyd.

#### NOTE

[Mr. Lloyd had rendered βούς *Ἡελίοιο* (Book I, line 8), *Bullocks of the Sun*. Thus Lamb: "*Oxen of the Sun*, I conjure. *Bullocks* is too *Smithfield* and *sublunary* a word. *Oxen of the Sun*, or of *Apollo*, but in any case not *bullocks*."

Again, Mr. Lloyd had written (Book I, line 69), —

The Cyclops' eye still rankles in his breast.

Lamb remarked: "Here is an unlucky confusion of literal with figurative language. One man's *eye* rankles in another's *breast*. 'Cyclops' wrongs' would do better."

For δαιτρός and κῆρυξ (Book I, lines 141, 143) Mr. Lloyd rendered "*cook*" and "*butler*."

Lamb said: "These sound too modern — *Kitchenish*. One might be called an officer or servitor, the other a server. Milton speaks of these things as the office mean 'of sewer and seneschal.' Perhaps sewer is too old. But *cook* and *butler* are too like modern establishments."

Lamb thus objects to Mr. Lloyd's employment of a flagrant modernism: "unaffected grace. Is there any word in Homer to express *affectation*? I think not. Then certainly he has no such idea as *unaffected*."]

# CCIV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

October 30, 1809.

Dear Coleridge, — I have but this moment received your letter, dated the 9th instant, having just come off a journey from Wiltshire, where I have been with Mary on a visit to Hazlitt. The journey has been of infinite service to her. We have had nothing but sunshiny days and daily walks from eight to twenty miles a-day; have seen Wilton, Salisbury, Stonehenge, &c. Her illness lasted but six weeks; it left her weak, but the country has made us whole. We came back to our Hogarth Room. I have made several acquisitions since you saw them, — and found Nos. 8, 9, 10 of *The Friend*. The account of Luther in the Warteburg is as fine as anything I ever read. God forbid that a man who has such things to say should be silenced for want of £100. This custom-and-duty age would have made the Preacher on the Mount take out a licence, and St. Paul's Epistles [would] not [have been] missible without a stamp. Oh, that you may find means to go on! But alas! where is Sir G. Beaumont? — Sotheby? What is become of the rich auditors in Albemarle Street? Your letter has saddened me.

I am so tired with my journey, being up all night, that I have neither things nor words in my power. I believe I express my admiration of the pamphlet. Its power over me was like that



which Milton's pamphlets must have had on his contemporaries, who were tuned to them. What a piece of prose! Do you hear if it is read at all? I am out of the world of readers. I hate all that do read, for they read nothing but reviews and new books. I gather myself up unto the old things.

I have put up shelves. You never saw a book-case in more true harmony with the contents than what I've nailed up in a room, which, though new, has more aptitudes for growing old than you shall often see; as one sometimes gets a friend in the middle of life, who becomes an old friend in a short time. My rooms are luxurious: one is for prints and one for books; a summer and a winter parlour. When shall I ever see you in them? [*A dozen lines are here obliterated by Lamb.*]

My head is so sore, I write I know not what. It always is after a ——

[The end of the sheet is torn off, and the remainder of about two lines with the signature is missing. — ED.]

#### CCV. — TO ROBERT LLOYD

January 1, 1810.

Dear Robert, — In great haste I write. The turkey is down at the fire, and some pleasant friends are come in to partake of it. The sender's health shall not be forgot. What you tell me

of your father's perseverance in his honorable task gives me great pleasure. Seven books are a serious earnest of the whole, which I hope to see finished.

We had a delightful month in Wiltshire, four weeks of uniform fine weather, the only fine days which had been all the summer; saw Salisbury Cathedral, Stonehenge, Wilton, &c. Mary is in excellent health, and sends her love. Accept of mine with my kind respects to Mrs. Ll., and to your father and mother.

Coleridge's *Friend* is occasionally sublime. What do you think of that description of Luther in his study in one of the earlier numbers? The worst is, he is always promising something which never comes, it is now 18th number, and continues introductory, the 17th (that stupid long letter) was nothing better than a prospectus and ought to have preceded the 1st number. But I rejoice that it lives.

When you come to London, you will find us at No. 2, Inner Temple Lane, with a few old books, a few old Hogarths round the room, and the household gods at last established. The feeling of home, which has been slow to come, has come at last. May I never move again, but may my next lodging be my coffin.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

NOTE

[This closes the correspondence with Robert Lloyd, who died on October 26, 1811.]

## CCVI.—TO THOMAS MANNING

January 2, 1810.

Dear Manning, — When I last wrote to you, I was in lodgings. I am now in chambers, No. 2, Inner Temple Lane, where I should be happy to see you any evening. Bring any of your friends, the Mandarins, with you. I have two sitting-rooms : I call them so *par excellence*, for you may stand, or loll, or lean, or try any posture in them ; but they are best for sitting ; not squatting down Japanese fashion, but the more decorous use of the posteriors which European usage has consecrated. I have two of these rooms on the third floor, and five sleeping, cooking, &c., rooms, on the fourth floor. In my best room is a choice collection of the works of Hogarth, an English painter of some humour. In my next best are shelves containing a small but well-chosen library. My best room commands a court, in which there are trees and a pump, the water of which is excellent — cold with brandy, and not very insipid without. Here I hope to set up my rest, and not quit till Mr. Powell, the undertaker, gives me notice that I may have possession of my last lodging. He lets lodgings for single gentlemen.

I sent you a parcel of books by my last, to give you some idea of the state of European literature. There comes with this two volumes, done up as letters, of minor poetry, a sequel to

*Mrs. Leicester* ; the best you may suppose mine ; the next best are my coadjutor's ; you may amuse yourself in guessing them out ; but I must tell you mine are but one-third in quantity of the whole. So much for a very delicate subject. It is hard to speak of one's self, &c. Holcroft had finished his life when I wrote to you, and Hazlitt has since finished his life—I do not mean his own life, but he has finished a life of Holcroft, which is going to press. Tuthill is Dr. Tuthill. I continue Mr. Lamb. I have published a little book for children on titles of honour : and to give them some idea of the difference of rank and gradual rising, I have made a little scale, supposing myself to receive the following various accessions of dignity from the king, who is the fountain of honour—As at first, 1, Mr. C. Lamb ; 2, C. Lamb, Esq. ; 3, Sir C. Lamb, Bart. ; 4, Baron Lamb of Stamford (where my family come from. I have chosen that if ever I should have my choice) ; 5, Viscount Lamb ; 6, Earl Lamb ; 7, Marquis Lamb ; 8, Duke Lamb. It would look like quibbling to carry it on further, and especially as it is not necessary for children to go beyond the ordinary titles of sub-regal dignity in our own country, otherwise I have sometimes in my dreams imagined myself still advancing, as 9th, King Lamb ; 10th, Emperor Lamb ; 11th, Pope Innocent, higher than which is nothing but the Lamb of God. Puns I have not made many (nor punch much), since the date

of my last; one I cannot help relating. A constable in Salisbury Cathedral was telling me that eight people dined at the top of the spire of the cathedral; upon which I remarked, that they must be very sharp-set. But in general I cultivate the reasoning part of my mind more than the imaginative. Do you know Kate  
\*\*\*\*\* I am stuffed out so with eating turkey for dinner, and another turkey for supper yesterday (turkey in Europe and turkey in Asia), that I can't jog on. It is New-Year here. That is, it was New-Year half-a-year back, when I was writing this. Nothing puzzles me more than time and space, and yet nothing puzzles me less, for I never think about them.

Miss Knap is turned midwife. Never having had a child herself, she can't draw any wrong analogies from her own case. Dr. Stoddart has had twins. There was five shillings to pay the nurse. Mrs. Godwin was impanelled on a jury of matrons last sessions. She saved a criminal's life by giving it as her opinion that —— The judge listened to her with the greatest deference.

The Persian ambassador is the principal thing talked of now. I sent some people to see him worship the sun on Primrose Hill at half-past six in the morning, 28th November; but he did not come, which makes me think the old fire-worshippers are a sect almost extinct in Persia. Have you trampled on the Cross yet? The Persian ambassador's name is Shaw Ali Mirza. The



common people call him Shaw Nonsense. While I think of it, I have put three letters besides my own three into the India post for you, from your brother, sister, and some gentleman whose name I forget. Will they, have they, did they, come safe? The distance you are at, cuts up tenses by the root. I think you said you did not know Kate \* \* \* \* \* I express her by nine stars, though she is but one, but if ever one star differed from another in glory —— You must have seen her at her father's. Try and remember her.

Coleridge is bringing out a paper in weekly numbers, called *The Friend*, which I would send, if I could; but the difficulty I had in getting the packets of books out to you before deters me; and you'll want something new to read when you come home. It is chiefly intended to puff off Wordsworth's poetry; but there are some noble things in it by the by. Except Kate, I have had no vision of excellence this year, and she passed by like the queen on her coronation day; you don't know whether you saw her or not. Kate is fifteen: I go about moping, and sing the old pathetic ballad I used to like in my youth, —

She's sweet fifteen,  
I'm *one year more*.

Mrs. Bland sung it in boy's clothes the first time I heard it. I sometimes think the lower notes in my voice are like Mrs. Bland's. That glorious singer Braham, one of my lights, is fled. He was for a season. He was a rare composition

of the Jew, the gentleman, and the angel, yet all these elements mixed up so kindly in him, that you could not tell which predominated ; but he is gone, and one Phillips is engaged instead. Kate is vanished, but Miss B[urrell] is always to be met with !

Queens drop away, while blue-legg'd Maukin thrives ;  
And courtly Mildred dies while country Madge survives.

That is not my poetry, but Quarles's ; but haven't you observed that the rarest things are the least obvious ? Don't show anybody the names in this letter. I write confidentially, and wish this letter to be considered as *private*. Hazlitt has written a *grammar* for Godwin ; Godwin sells it bound up with a treatise of his own on language, but the *grey mare is the better horse*. I don't allude to Mrs. Godwin, but to the word *grammar*, which comes near to *grey mare*, if you observe, in sound. That figure is called paranomasia in Greek. I am sometimes happy in it. An old woman begged of me for charity. " Ah ! sir," said she, " I have seen better days ;" " So have I, good woman," I replied ; but I meant literally, days not so rainy and overcast as that on which she begged : she meant more prosperous days. Mr. Dawe is made associate of the Royal Academy. By what law of association I can't guess. Mrs. Holcroft, Miss Holcroft, Mr. and Mrs. Godwin, Mr. and Mrs. Hazlitt, Mrs. Martin and Louisa, Mrs. Lum, Capt. Burney, Mrs. Burney, Martin Burney, Mr. Rickman, Mrs. Rick-

man, Dr. Stoddart, William Dollin, Mr. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Norris, Mr. Fenwick, Mrs. Fenwick, Miss Fenwick, a man that saw you at our house one day, and a lady that heard me speak of you; Mrs. Buffam that heard Hazlitt mention you, Dr. Tuthill, Mrs. Tuthill, Colonel Harwood, Mrs. Harwood, Mr. Collier, Mrs. Collier, Mr. Sutton, Nurse, Mr. Fell, Mrs. Fell, Mr. Marshall, are very well, and occasionally inquire after you. Mary sends her love. [*End of letter cut away.*]

CCVII. — TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[Dated by H. C. R. February 7, 1810.]

Dear R., — My brother whom you have met at my rooms (a plump good-looking man of seven and forty!) has written a book about humanity, which I transmit to you herewith. Wilson the publisher has put it in his head that you can get it reviewed for him. I daresay it is not in the scope of your Review; but if you could put it in any likely train, he would rejoice. For alas! our boasted humanity partakes of vanity. As it is, he teases me to death with chusing to suppose that I could get it into all the Reviews at a moment's notice — I!! who have been set up as a mark for them to throw at, and would willingly consign them all to hell flames and Megæra's snaky locks.

But here 's the book — and don't shew it Mrs.

Collier, for I remember she makes excellent *eel* soup, and the leading points of the book are directed against that very process.

Yours truly, C. LAMB

At home to-night — Wednesday.

CCVIII. — TO CHARLES LLOYD, SR.

March 10, 1810.

My dear Sir, — The above are all the faults I, who profess myself to be a mere English reader, could find after a scrupulous perusal twice over of your neat little book. I assure you it gave me great pleasure in the perusal, much more in this shape than in the manuscript, and I should be very sorry you should give up the finishing of it on so poor pretence as your *age* [sixty-two], which is not so much by ten years as Dryden's when he wrote his fables, which are his best works allowed, and not more than Milton's when he had scarce entered upon his original Epic Poem. You have done nearly a third; persevere and let us see the whole. I am sure I should prize it for its Homeric plainness and truth above the confederate jumble of Pope, Broome, and Fenton which goes under Pope's name, and is far inferior to his *Iliad*. I have picked out what I think blemishes, but they are but a score of words (I am a mere word-pecker) in six times as many pages. The rest all gave

me pleasure, and most of all the book [the sixth] in which Ulysses and Nausicaa meet. You have infused a kind of biblical patriarchal manner into it, it reads like some story of Jacob and Rachel, or some of those primitive manners. I am ashamed to carp at words, but I did it in obedience to your desires, and the plain reason why I did not acknowledge your kind present *sooner* was that I had no criticisms of value to make. I shall certainly beg the opinion of my friend who read the two first books on this enlarged performance. But he is so very much engaged that I cannot at present get at him, and besides him I have no acquaintance that takes much interest in poetry, Greek or English. But I hope and adjure you to go on and do not make excuses of age till you have completed the *Odyssey*, and done a great part of Horace besides. Then you will be entitled to hang up your harp.

I am, dear Sir, with love to all your family,  
Your humble servant, C. LAMB

CCIX. — TO JOHN MATHEW GUTCH

April 9, 1810.

Dear Gutch, — I did not see your brother, who brought me Wither; but he understood, he said, you were daily expecting to come to town: this has prevented my writing. The books have pleased me excessively: I should think you could not have made a better selection. I never saw



*Philarete* before — judge of my pleasure. I could not forbear scribbling certain critiques in pencil on the blank leaves. Shall I send them, or may I expect to see you in town? Some of them are remarks on the character of Wither and of his writings. Do you mean to have anything of that kind?

What I have said on *Philarete* is poor, but I think some of the rest not so bad: perhaps I have exceeded my commission in scrawling over the copies; but my delight therein must excuse me, and pencil-marks will rub out. Where is the Life? Write, for I am quite in the dark.

Yours, with many thanks, C. LAMB

Perhaps I could digest the few critiques prefixed to the *Satires*, *Shepherds Hunting*, &c., into a short abstract of Wither's character and works, at the end of his Life. But, maybe, you don't want anything, and have said all you wish in the Life.

#### CCX.—TO BASIL MONTAGU

Mr. Hazlitt's: Winterslow, near Sarum,  
July 12, 1810.

Dear [Montagu], — I have turned and twisted the MSS. in my head, and can make nothing of them. I knew when I took them that I could not; but I do not like to do an act of ungracious necessity at once; so I am ever committing myself by half engagements and total failures.

I cannot make anybody understand why I can't do such things. It is a defect in my occiput. I cannot put other people's thoughts together; I forget every paragraph as fast as I read it; and my head has received such a shock by an all-night journey on the top of the coach, that I shall have enough to do to nurse it into its natural pace before I go home. I must devote myself to imbecility. I must be gloriously useless while I stay here.

How is Mrs. [M.]? will she pardon my inefficiency? The city of Salisbury is full of weeping and wailing. The bank has stopt payment; and everybody in the town kept money at it, or has got some of its notes. Some have lost all they had in the world. It is the next thing to seeing a city with a plague within its walls. The Wilton people are all undone. All the manufacturers there kept cash at the Salisbury bank; and I do suppose it to be the unhappiest county in England this, where I am making holiday.

We purpose setting out for Oxford Tuesday fortnight, and coming thereby home. But no more night travelling. My head is sore (understand it of the inside) with that deduction of my natural rest which I suffered coming down. Neither Mary nor I can spare a morsel of our rest. It is incumbent on us to be misers of it. Travelling is not good for us: we travel so seldom. If the sun be hell, it is not for the fire, but for the sempiternal motion of that miserable body

of light. How much more dignified leisure hath a mussel glued to his unpassable rocky limit, two inch square! He hears the tide roll over him, backwards and forwards twice a-day (as the damned Salisbury long coach goes and returns in eight and forty hours), but knows better than to take an outside night-place a top on't. He is the owl of the sea — Minerva's fish — the fish of wisdom.

Our kindest remembrances to Mrs. [M.]

Yours truly, C. LAMB

#### CCXI. — TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

August 9, 1810.

Dear H., — Epistemon is not well. Our pleasant excursion has ended sadly for one of us. You will guess I mean my sister. She got home very well (I was very ill on the journey), and continued so till Monday night, when her complaint came on, and she is now absent from home.

I am glad to hear you are all well. I think I shall be mad if I take any more journeys with two experiences against it. I find all well here. Kind remembrances to Sarah; have just got her letter.

H. Robinson has been to Blenheim. He says you will be sorry to hear that we should have asked for the Titian Gallery there. One of his friends knew of it, and asked to see it. It is never shown but to those who inquire for it.

The pictures are all Titians, Jupiter and Leda, Mars and Venuses, &c., all naked pictures, which may be a reason they don't show it to females. But he says they are very fine; and perhaps it is shown separately to put another fee into the shower's pocket. Well, I shall never see it.

I have lost all wish for sights. God bless you. I shall be glad to see you in London.

Yours truly, C. LAMB

CCXII.—TO MRS. CLARKSON

September 18, 1810.

Dear Mrs. Clarkson, — I did not write till I could have the satisfaction of sending you word that my sister was better. She is in fact quite restored, and will be with me in little more than a week. I received Mr. C.'s letter and transmitted it to Hazlitt — my kind love to him, and to Miss W. Tell her I hope that while she stays in London, she will make our chambers her lodging. If she can put up with half a bed, I am sure she will be a most welcome visitor to Mary and me. The Montagu's set out for the North this day. What fine things they are going to see, for the first time! which I have seen, but in all human probability shall never see again! — the mountains often come back to me in my dreams, or rather I miss them at those times, for I have been repeatedly haunted with the *same dream*, which is that I am in Cumberland, that

I have been there some weeks, and am at the end of my holidays, but in all that time I have not seen Skiddaw, &c., — the hills are all vanished, and I shall go home without seeing them. The trouble of this dream denotes the weight they must have had on my mind, and while I was there, which was almost oppressive, and perhaps is caused by the great difficulty I have in recalling anything like a distinct form of any one of those great masses to my memory.

Bless me, I have scarce left room to say Good-bye.

C. LAMB

CCXIII. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

East India House, October 19, 1810.

Dear W., — I forwarded the letter which you sent to me, without opening it, to your sister at Binfield. She has returned it to me, and begs me to tell you that she intends returning from B. on Monday or Tuesday next, when Priscilla leaves it, and that it was her earnest wish to spend another week with us in London, but she awaits another letter from home to determine her. I can only say that she appeared so much pleased with London, and that she is so little likely to see it again for a long time, that if you can spare her, it will be almost a pity not. But doubtless she will have heard again from you, before I can get a reply to this letter, and what she next hears she says will be decisive. If wanted, she will set



out immediately from London. Mary has been very ill, which you have heard I suppose from the Montagues. She is very weak and low-spirited now. I was much pleased with your continuation of the *Essay on Epitaphs*. It is the only sensible thing which has been written on that subject, and it goes to the bottom. In particular I was pleased with your translation of that turgid epitaph into the plain feeling under it. It is perfectly a test. But what is the reason we have so few good epitaphs after all ?

A very striking instance of your position might be found in the churchyard of Ditton-upon-Thames, if you know such a place. Ditton-upon-Thames has been blessed by the residence of a poet, who for love or money, I do not well know which, has dignified every gravestone for the last few years with bran-new verses, all different, and all ingenious, with the author's name at the bottom of each. The sweet Swan of Thames has artfully diversified his strains and his rhymes, that the same thought never occurs twice. More justly perhaps, as no thought ever occurs at all, there was a physical impossibility that the same thought should recur. It is long since I saw and read these inscriptions, but I remember the impression was of a smug usher at his desk, in the intervals of instruction levelling his pen.

Of death, as it consists of dust and worms, and mourners and uncertainty, he had never thought, but the word "death" he had often seen separ-

ate and conjunct with other words, till he had learned to skill of all its attributes as glibly as Unitarian Belsham will discuss you the attributes of the word "God" in a pulpit, and will talk of infinity with a tongue that dangles from a scull that never reached in thought and thorough imagination two inches, or further than from his hand to his mouth, or from the vestry to the sounding board. [But the] epitaphs were trim and sprag and patent, and pleased the survivors of Thames-Ditton above the old mumpsimus of "Afflictions Sore."

To do justice though, it must be owned that even the excellent feeling which dictated this dirge when new, must have suffered something in passing thro' so many thousand applications, many of them no doubt quite misplaced, as I have seen in Islington churchyard (I think) an epitaph to an infant who died "*Aetatis* four months," with this seasonable inscription appended, "Honor thy father and mother that thy days may be long in the land," &c.

Sincerely wishing your children better [*words cut out with signature*].

#### CCXIV.—TO MISS WORDSWORTH

November 13, 1810.

[The following was added by Charles Lamb to a letter written by his sister Mary:]

Mary has left a little space for me to fill up

with nonsense, as the geographers used to cram monsters in the voids of their maps and call it *terra incognita*. She has told you how she has taken to water, like a hungry otter. I too limp after her in lame imitation, but it goes against me a little *at first*. I have been *aquavorous* now for full four days, and it seems a moon. I am full of cramps and rheumatisms, and cold internally so that fire won't warm me, yet I bear all for virtue's sake. Must I then leave you, gin, rum, brandy, aqua vitae — pleasant jolly fellows — damn temperance and them that first invented it, some Anti-Noahite.

Coleridge has powdered his head, and looks like Bacchus, Bacchus ever sleek and young. He is going to turn sober, but his Clock has not struck yet, meantime he pours down goblet after goblet, the second to see where the first is gone, the third to see no harm happens to the second, a fourth to say there's another coming, and a fifth to say he's not sure he's the last. William Henshaw is dead. He died yesterday, aged fifty-six. It was but a twelvemonth or so back that his father, an ancient gunsmith, and my godfather, sounded me as to my willingness to be guardian to this William in case of his (the old man's) death. William had three times broke in business, twice in England, once in t' other hemisphere. He returned from America a sot and hath liquidated all debts. What a hopeful ward I am rid of, — *aetatis* fifty-six. I must have

taken care of his morals, seen that he did not form imprudent connections, given my consent before he could have married, &c. From all which the stroke of death hath relieved me. Mrs. Reynolds is the name of the lady to whom I will remember you to-morrow. Farewell. Wish me strength to continue. I've been eating jugg'd hare. The toast and water makes me quite sick.

C. LAMB

CCXV.—TO MISS WORDSWORTH

November 23, 1810.

[The following was added by Charles Lamb to a letter written by his sister Mary:]

We are in a pickle. Mary from her affectation of physiognomy has hired a stupid big country wench who looked honest, as she thought, and has been doing her work some days, but without eating — eats no butter nor meat, but prefers cheese with her tea for breakfast — and now it comes out that she was ill when she came with lifting her mother about (who is now with God) when she was dying, and with riding up from Norfolk four days and nights in the waggon. She got advice yesterday and took something which has made her bring up a quart of blood, and she now lies, a dead weight upon our humanity, in her bed, incapable of getting up, refusing to go into an hospital, having nobody in town but a poor asthmatic dying uncle, whose son lately married a drab

who fills his house, and there is nowhere she can go, and she seems to have made up her mind to take her flight to heaven from our bed. — O God! O God! — for the little wheelbarrow which trundled the hunchback from door to door to try the various charities of different professions of mankind!

Here's her uncle just crawled up, he is far liker death than she. O the parish, the parish, the hospital, the infirmary, the charnel-house, these are places meet for such guests, not our quiet mansion where nothing but affluent plenty and literary ease should abound. Howard's House, Howard's House, or where the parylitic descended thro' the skylight (what a God's gift!) to get at our Saviour. In this perplexity such topics as Spanish papers and Monk-houses sink into comparative insignificance. What shall we do? — If she died, it were something: gladly would I pay the coffin-maker and the bellman and searchers — O Christ.

C. LAMB

#### CCXVI. — TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

November 28, 1810.

Dear Hazlitt, — I sent you on Saturday a Cobbett, containing your reply to the *Edinburgh Review*, which I thought you would be glad to receive as an example of attention on the part of Mr. Cobbett to insert it so speedily. Did you get it? We have received your pig, and return



you thanks; it will be dressed in due form, with appropriate sauce, this day. Mary has been very ill indeed since you saw her; that is, as ill as she can be to remain at home. But she is a good deal better now, owing to a very careful regimen. She drinks nothing but water, and never goes out; she does not even go to the captain's. Her indisposition has been ever since that night you left town; the night Miss W[ordsworth] came. Her coming, and that damned Mrs. Godwin coming and staying so late that night, so upset her that she lay broad awake all that night, and it was by a miracle that she escaped a very bad illness, which I thoroughly expected. I have made up my mind that she shall never have any one in the house again with her, and that no one shall sleep with her, not even for a night; for it is a very serious thing to be always living with a kind of fever upon her; and therefore I am sure you will take it in good part if I say that if Mrs. Hazlitt comes to town at any time, however glad we shall be to see her in the daytime, I cannot ask her to spend a night under our roof. Some decision we must come to, for the harassing fever that we have both been in, owing to Miss Wordsworth's coming, is not to be borne; and I would rather be dead than so alive. However, at present, owing to a regimen and medicines which Tut-hill has given her, who very kindly volunteer'd the care of her, she is a great deal quieter, though too much harassed by company, who cannot or

will not see how late hours and society tease her.

Poor Phillips had the cup dash'd out of his lips as it were. He had every prospect of the situation, when about ten days since one of the council of the R. Society started for the place himself, being a rich merchant who lately failed, and he will certainly be elected on Friday next. P. is very sore and miserable about it.

Coleridge is in town, or at least at Hammer-smith. He is writing or going to write in the *Courier* against Cobbett, and in favour of paper money.

No news. Remember me kindly to Sarah. I write from the office.

Yours ever,

C. LAMB

I just open'd it to say the pig, upon proof, hath turned out as good as I predicted. My fauces yet retain the sweet porcine odour. I find you have received the Cobbett. I think your paper complete.

Mrs. Reynolds, who is a sage woman, approves of the pig.

#### CCXVII.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

[No date] 1810.

Dear Godwin, — I have found it for several reasons indispensable to my comfort, and to my sister's, to have no visitors in the forenoon. If I

cannot accomplish this I am determined to leave town.

I am extremely sorry to do anything in the slightest degree that may seem offensive to you or to Mrs. Godwin, but when a general rule is fixed on, you know how odious in a case of this sort it is to make exceptions; I assure you I have given up more than one friendship in stickling for this point. It would be unfair to those from whom I have parted with regret to make exceptions, which I would not do for them.

Let me request you not to be offended, and to request Mrs. G. not to be offended, if I beg both your compliances with this wish. Your friendship is as dear to me as that of any person on earth, and if it were not for the necessity of keeping tranquillity at home, I would not seem so unreasonable.

If you were to see the agitation that my sister is in, between the fear of offending you and Mrs. G. and the difficulty of maintaining a system which she feels we must do to live without wretchedness, you would excuse this seeming strange request, which I send you with a trembling anxiety as to its reception with you, whom I would never offend. I rely on your goodness.

C. LAMB

## CCXVIII.—TO JOHN MORGAN

March 8, 1811.

There, don't read any further, because the letter is not intended for you, but for Coleridge, who might perhaps not have opened it directed to him *suo nomine*. It is to invite C. to Lady Jerningham's on Sunday. Her address is to be found within. We come to Hammersmith notwithstanding on Sunday, and hope Mrs. M. will not think of getting us green peas or any such expensive luxuries. A plate of plain turtle, another of turbot, with good roast beef in the rear, and, as Alderman Curtis says, whoever can't make a dinner of that ought to be damn'd.

C. LAMB

## CCXIX.—TO WILLIAM HAZLITT

October 2, 1811.

[The following was added by Charles Lamb to letter of same date written by his sister Mary to Sarah Hazlitt:]

Dear Hazlitt,—I cannot help accompanying my sister's congratulations to Sarah with some of my own to you on this happy occasion of a man child being born.

Delighted fancy already sees him some future rich alderman or opulent merchant; painting perhaps a little in his leisure hours for amusement like the late H. Bunbury, Esq.

Pray, are the Winterslow estates entailed? I am afraid lest the young dog when he grows up should cut down the woods, and leave no groves for widows to take their lonesome solace in. The Wem estate of course can only devolve on him, in case of your brother leaving no male issue.

Well, my blessing and heaven's be upon him, and make him like his father, with something a better temper and a smoother head of hair, and then all the men and women must love him.

Martin and the card-boys join in congratulations. Love to Sarah. Sorry we are not within caudle-shot.

C. LAMB

If the widow be assistant on this notable occasion, give our due respects and kind remembrances to her.

CCXX.— TO CHARLES LLOYD, SR.

September 8, 1812.

Dear Sir,— I return you thanks for your little book. I am no great Latinist, but you appear to me to have very happily caught the Horatian manner. Some of them I had seen before. What gave me most satisfaction has been the 14th Epistle (its easy and gentlemanlike beginning, particularly), and perhaps next to that, the Epistle to Augustus, which reads well even after Pope's



delightful imitation of it. What I think the least finished is the 18th Epistle. It is a metre which never gave me much pleasure. I like your *eight* syllable verses very much. They suit the epistolary style quite as well as the *ten*. I am only sorry not to find the Satires in the same volume. I hope we may expect them. I proceed to find some few oversights, if you will indulge me, or what seem so to me, for I have neglected my Latin (and quite lost my Greek) since I left construing it at school. I will take them as I find them mark'd in order, —

[Virtutem verba putas et  
Lucum ligna? (Bk. I, Epist. VI)]

was rendered thus by Lloyd, —

Think'st thou that virtue is composed of words,  
As some men think a grove composed of boards?]

I do not quite like rendering *ligna*, *boards*. I take the passage to allude to the religious character of their groves, and that Horace means to say, "If you are one who think virtue to be mere words, and account no more of a grove (that is, of a consecrated place) than of so much timber." As I should say, if you look upon a church as only so much brick and mortar, *i. e.* divested of its sacred character. I don't know if I am right — but *boards* sound awkward to me: *timber* I think should be the word. Timber is a word we apply to wood dead or alive. Boards only to the dead wood.

[Mr. Lloyd had converted Horace's

Dum pueris omnis pater et matercula pallet,  
Officiosaque sedulitas et opella forensis  
Adducit febres et testamenta resignat.

(Bk. I, Epist. VII)

into

Now fathers and mothers are pale for their boys,  
And the forum's engagements, its bustle and noise,  
And officious attention, together combine  
To bring fevers, which cause us our wills to resign.]

*Our wills to resign* is literally the rendering of *testamenta resignare* — and would it not also as aptly apply to *voluntates deponere*? The resignation of the will in an hour of sickness gives one a Christian idea. At all events, resign should have been written re-sign, which would have precluded the ambiguity.

[Again, Mr. Lloyd (Bk. I, Epist. X) :

Of the old Dove thou keep'st the nest,  
While I (and think myself more blest)  
Extol the scenes which nature yields,  
Rivers which flow thro' verdant fields, &c.]

"Of the old dove thou keep'st the nest." Turning to the original, I find it "*vetuli notique columbi, Tu nidum servas, ego,*" &c., which I have always translated a pair of old and well acquainted Doves, one of us (*you*) keep to your nest, the other (I) praise the country. I have always taken *columbi* to be plural and to refer to *Tu et ego*. Referring to Creech, I find he translates it as I would.

[In translating *Libertino natum patre* in Bk. I, Epist. XX, Mr. Lloyd had written "From a father libertine descended."]

I don't know whether *libertine* in our unhappy perversion of the meaning would be any great compliment to the memory of a parent. In English it always means a person of loose morals, though by transposing the order of the words you have perhaps obviated the objection. A *libertine father* would have shocked the ear. The transposition leads us to the Latin meaning, by making us pause a little. I believe this is a foolish objection. Horace's own meaning for the word was, of course, a "freed man."

You have two or three times translated *solemnis* by "solemn." Has not the English word acquired a gravity and religion, which the Latin did not intend? "Solemnly unsound" — does *solemnia insanire* mean anything more than to be mad with leave of custom — to be orderly or warrantably mad?

[Romae dulce diu fuit et sollemne reclusa  
Mane domo vigilare (Bk. II, Epist. I)]

was rendered by Lloyd, —

'T was long a custom sanctioned at Rome,  
To spend the morning solemnly at home.]

"To spend the morning solemnly at home."  
Does *solenne fuit* mean anything more than that it was customary or habitual with them to stay at home? Our *solemn* is applied only *directly* to forms of religious or grave occasions, as a solemn

hymn or funeral ; and *indirectly* or ironically to grave stupid people — as a solemn coxcomb — which latter I am afraid you will think me for being so verbose on a trifling objection.

[Mr. Lloyd, in the same Epistle, had rendered *socco*, “buskins.” It should have been rendered by the word *sock*, which refers to comedy. The cothurnus or buskin was the high-raised shoe of the *tragic* actor.]

Let me only add that I hope you will continue an employment which must have been so delightful to you. That it may have the power of stealing you occasionally from some sad thoughts is my fervent wish and hope. Pray, Dear Sir, give my kindest remembrances to Mrs. Lloyd, and to Plumstead — I am afraid I can add no more who are likely to remember me. Charles and I sometimes correspond. He is a letter in my debt.

[*Signature cut away.*]

#### CCXXI.— TO JOHN DYER COLLIER

[1812 or 1813.]

Dear Sir, — Mrs. Collier has been kind enough to say that you would endeavour to procure a reporter’s situation for W. Hazlitt. I went to consult him upon it last night, and he acceded very eagerly to the proposal, and requests me to say how very much obliged he feels to your kindness, and how glad he should be for its success. He is, indeed, at his wits’ end for a livelihood ;

and, I should think, especially qualified for such an employment, from his singular facility in retaining all conversations at which he has been ever present. I think you may recommend him with confidence. I am sure I shall *myself* be obliged to you for your exertions, having a great regard for him.

Yours truly, C. LAMB

CCXXII.—TO JOHN SCOTT

February, 1814.

Sir, — Your explanation is perfectly pleasant to me, and I accede to your proposal most willingly.

As I began with the beginning of this month, I will if you please call upon you for *your part of the engagement* (supposing I shall have performed mine) on the first of March next, and thenceforward if it suit you quarterly. You will occasionally wink at Briskets and Veiny Pieces.

Your humble servant, C. LAMB

CCXXIII.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

August 9, 1814.

Dear Wordsworth, — I cannot tell you how pleased I was at the receipt of the great armful of poetry which you have sent me, and to get it before the rest of the world too ! I have gone quite through with it, and was thinking to have



accomplish'd that pleasure a second time before I wrote to thank you, but M. Burney came in the night (while we were out) and made holy theft of it, but we expect restitution in a day or two. It is the noblest conversational poem I ever read. A day in heaven. The part (or rather main body) which has left the sweetest odour on my memory (a bad term for the remains of an impression so recent) is the Tales of the Church-yard. The only girl among seven brethren, born out of due time and not duly taken away again — the deaf man and the blind man — the Jacobite and the Hanoverian whom antipathies reconcile — the Scarron-entry of the rustivating parson upon his solitude — these were all new to me too. My having known the story of Margaret (at the beginning), a very old acquaintance, even as long back as I saw you first at Stowey, did not make her reappearance less fresh. I don't know what to pick out of this best of books upon the best subjects for partial naming.

That gorgeous sunset is famous. I think it must have been the identical one we saw on Salisbury plain five years ago, that drew Phillips from the card table where he had sat from rise of that luminary to its unequall'd set ; but neither he nor I had gifted eyes to see those symbols of common things glorified, such as the prophets saw them, in that sunset — the wheel — the potter's clay — the wash pot — the wine-press — the almond-tree rod — the baskets of figs — the

fourfold visaged head, the throne and Him that sat thereon.

One feeling I was particularly struck with as what I recognised so very lately at Harrow Church on entering in it after a hot and secular day's pleasure, — the instantaneous coolness and calming, almost transforming, properties of a country church just entered — a certain fragrance which it has — either from its holiness, or being kept shut all the week, or the air that is let in being pure country — exactly what you have reduced into words, but I am feeling I cannot. The reading your lines about it fixed me for a time, a monument, in Harrow Church (do you know it ?) with its fine long spire white as wash'd marble, to be seen by vantage of its high site as far as Salisbury spire itself almost.

I shall select a day or two very shortly when I am coolest in brain to have a steady second reading, which I feel will lead to many more, for it will be a stock book with me while eyes or spectacles shall be lent me.

There is a deal of noble matter about mountain scenery, yet not so much as to overpower and discountenance a poor Londoner or South country man entirely, though Mary seems to have felt it occasionally a little too powerfully, for it was her remark during reading it that by your system it was doubtful whether a liver in towns had a soul to be saved. She almost trembled for that invisible part of us in her.

Save for a late excursion to Harrow and a day or two on the banks of the Thames this summer, rural images were fast fading from my mind, and by the wise provision of the Regent all that was countryfy'd in the parks is all but obliterated. The very colour of green is vanish'd, the whole surface of Hyde Park is dry crumbling sand (*Arabia Arenosa*), not a vestige or hint of grass ever having grown there, booths and drinking places go all round it for a mile and half I am confident — I might say two miles in circuit — the stench of liquors, *bad* tobacco, dirty people and provisions, conquers the air and we are stifled and suffocated in Hyde Park.

Order after order has been issued by Lord Sidmouth in the name of the Regent (acting in behalf of his Royal father) for the dispersion of the varlets, but in vain. The *vis unita* of all the publicans in London, Westminster, Marybone, and miles round is too powerful a force to put down. The Regent has rais'd a phantom which he cannot lay. There they'll stay probably forever. The whole beauty of the place is gone — that lake-look of the Serpentine — it has got foolish ships upon it — but something whispers to have confidence in nature and its revival, —

at the coming of the *milder day*

These monuments shall all be overgrown.

Meantime I confess to have smoked one delicious pipe in one of the cleanliest and goodliest of the booths — a tent rather, “O call it not a booth!”

— erected by the public spirit of Watson, who keeps the Adam and Eve at Pancras (the ale houses have all emigrated with their train of bottles, mugs, corkscrews, waiters, into Hyde Park — whole ale houses with all their ale !) in company with some of the guards that had been in France and a fine French girl (habited like a princess of banditti) which one of the dogs had transported from the Garonne to the Serpentine. The unusual scene, in Hyde Park, by candle-light in open air, good tobacco, bottled stout, made it look like an interval in a campaign, a repose after battle. I almost fancied scars smarting, and was ready to club a story with my comrades of some of my lying deeds.

After all, the fireworks were splendid — the rockets in clusters, in trees and all shapes, spreading about like young stars in the making, floundering about in space (like unbroke horses) till some of Newton's calculations should fix them, but then they went out. Any one who could see 'em and the still finer showers of gloomy rain fire that fell sulkily and angrily from 'em, and could go to bed without dreaming of the Last Day, must be as hardened an Atheist as \* \* \* \* \*

[? Godwin.]

Again let me thank you for your present, and assure you that fireworks and triumphs have not distracted me from receiving a calm and noble enjoyment from it (which I trust I shall often), and I sincerely congratulate you on its appearance.

With kindest remembrances to you and household, we remain yours sincerely,

C. LAMB AND SISTER

CCXXIV. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE<sup>1</sup>

August 13, 1814.

Dear Resuscitate, — There comes to you by the vehicle from Lad Lane this day a volume of German; what it is I cannot justly say, the characters of those northern nations having been always singularly harsh and unpleasant to me. It is a contribution of Dr. Southey towards your wants, and you would have had it sooner but for an odd accident. I wrote for it three days ago, and the Doctor, as he thought, sent it me. A book of like exterior he did send, but being disclosed, how far unlike. It was the *Well-bred Scholar*, — a book with which it seems the Doctor laudably fills up those hours which he can steal from his medical avocations. Chesterfield, Blair, Beattie, portions from *The Life of Savage*, make up a prettyish system of morality and the *Belles-Lettres*, which Mr. Mylne, a schoolmaster, has properly brought together, and calls the collection by the denomination above mentioned. The Doctor had no sooner discovered his error than he despatched man and horse to rectify the mistake, and with a pretty kind of ingenuous mod-

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter appears, in its chronological order, in Vol. I.



esty in his note seemeth to deny any knowledge of the *Well-bred Scholar*; false modesty surely and a blush misplaced; for, what more pleasing than the consideration of professional austerity thus relaxing, thus improving; but so, when a child I remember blushing, being caught on my knees to my Maker, or doing otherwise some pious and praiseworthy action; *now* I rather love such things to be seen.

Henry Crabb Robinson is out upon his circuit, and his books are inaccessible without his leave and key. He is attending the Midland Circuit, — a short term, but to him, as to many young lawyers, a long vacation sufficiently dreary. I thought I could do no better than transmit to him, not extracts, but your very letter itself, than which I think I never read anything more moving, more pathetic, or more conducive to the purpose of persuasion. The Crab is a sour Crab if it does not sweeten him. I think it would draw another third volume of Dodsley out of me; but you say you don't want any English books. Perhaps, after all, that's as well; one's romantic credulity is for ever misleading [one] into misplaced acts of fool[ery]. Crab might have answered by this time: his juices take a long time suppl[y]ing, but they'll run at last, — I know they will, — pure golden pippin. His address is at T. Robinson's, Bury, and if on circuit, to be forwarded immediately — such my peremptory superscription. A fearful rumour has since reached me that

the Crab is on the eve of setting out for France. If he is in England, your letter will reach him, and I flatter myself a touch of the persuasive of my own, which accompanies it, will not be thrown away; if it be, he is a sloe, and no true-hearted crab, and there's an end. For that life of the German conjuror which you speak of, *Colerus de Vitâ Doctoris vix-Intelligibilis*, I perfectly remember the last evening we spent with Mrs. Morgan and Miss Brent, in London Street (by that token we had raw rabbits for supper, and Miss Brent prevailed upon me to take a glass of brandy and water after supper, which is not my habit), — I perfectly remember reading portions of that life in their parlour, and I think it must be among their packages. It was the very last evening we were at that house. What is gone of that frank-hearted circle, Morgan and his gos-lettuces? He eat[s] walnuts better than any man I ever knew. Friendships in these parts stagnate.

One piece of news I know will give you pleasure, Rickman is made a Clerk to the House of Commons, £2000 a year with greater expectations — but that is not the news — but it is — that poor card-playing Phillips, that has felt himself for so many years the outcast of Fortune, which feeling pervaded his very intellect till it made the destiny it feared, withering his hopes in the great and little games of life — by favour of the single star that ever shone upon him since his birth, has strangely stept into — Rickman's

Secretaryship—sword, bag, House and all—from a hopeless £100 a year, eaten up aforehand with desperate debts, to a clear £400 or £500—it almost reconciles me to the belief of a moral government of the world.

The man stares and gapes and seems to be always wondering at what has befallen him—he tries to be eager at cribbage, but alas! the source of that interest is dried up for ever; he no longer plays for his next day's meal, or to determine whether he shall have a half dinner or a whole dinner, whether he shall buy a pair of black silk stockings or coax his old ones a week or two longer, the poor man's relish of a trump, the four honours, is gone—and I do not know whether if we could get at the bottom of things, whether poor star-doomed Phillips with his hair staring with despair was not a happier being than the sleek, well-combed, oily-pated Secretary that has succeeded. The gift is, however, clogged with one stipulation, that the Secretary do remain a single man. Here I smell Rickman. Thus at once are gone all Phillips's matrimonial dreams, those verses which he wrote himself and those which a superior pen (with modesty let me speak as I name no names) indited for him to Elisa, Amelia, &c. — for Phillips was always a wife-hunting, probably, from the circumstance of his having formed an extreme rash connection in early life which paved the way to all his after misfortunes, but there is an obstinacy in human

nature which such accidents only serve to whet on to try again. Pleasure thus at two entrances quite shut out, I hardly know how to determine of Phillips's result of happiness. He appears satisfy'd, but never those bursts of gaiety, those moment-rules from the Cave of Despondency, that used to make his face shine and show the lines that care had marked in it. I would bet an even wager he marries secretly, the Speaker finds it out, and he is reverted to his old liberty and a hundred pounds a year. These are but speculations; I can think of no other news.

I am going to eat turbot, turtle, venison, marrow pudd[ing], — cold punch, claret, Madeira, — at our annual feast, at half-past four this day. Mary has ordered the bolt to my bedroom door inside to be taken off and a practicable latch to be put on, that I may n't bar myself in and be suffocated by my neckcloth, so we have taken all precautions, three watchmen are engaged to carry the body upstairs. — Pray for me [*obliteration.*]

They keep bothering me (I 'm at office), and my ideas are confused. Let me know if I can be of any service as to books. God forbid the *Architectonicon* should be sacrificed to a foolish scruple of some book proprietor, as if books did not belong with the highest propriety to those that understand 'em best.

C. LAMB

PRINTED BY H. O. HOUGHTON & CO.  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, U. S. A.

*The Riverside Press*











